

**The Ramakrishna Mission  
Institute of Culture Library**

**Presented by**

**Dr. Baridbaran Mukerji**

**RMICL-- 8**

**17125**

**THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INSTITUTE OF CULTURE  
LIBRARY**

## CALCUTTA

**OPENS.**

TEL.

**FINES : One anna per day after the last date below.**

**RENEWALS :** By post, telephone or in person. Quote the number opposite and last date below.

P.T.O.











A  
**NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY FOR INDIA.**

**VOLUME IV.**

BY  
**JYOTIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA.**

---

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.  
Printed by S. A. GUNNY,  
*at the Alexandra Steam Machine Press,*   
**DACCA.**

**1914.**

---

**30 Volumes Rs. 20.**

**Single Copy Re. 1.**

U.M.C LIBRARY	
Acc No	
Class. No	
Date	
Date	
Class	
Date	
Bk.Cat	
Check by	

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
1. Toru Dutt	297—310
2. Swami Daye Saraswati	311—327
3. Nawab Sir Khwaja Abdul Gunny, K. C. S. I.	328—333
4. Pandit Ajudhia Nath	334—343
5. * Harish Chandra Mookerjea	344—354
6. Rai Jai Prakash Lall Bahadur, C. I. E.	355—363
7. Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, K. C. S. I.	364—377
8. Raja Lachman Singh	378—385
9. Mahamahopadhyaya Dwarka Nath Sen	386—391
10. * Maharani Svarnamayee, C. I.	392—398

---

\* Never photographed in life-time hence no portrait is given.



## National Biography for India.



Toru Dutt.

Born—1850.

*Died—1877.*



## TORU DUTT.

---

**"From her childhood she gave promise of inspired poetry and during the short span of life she enriched English literature by her poetic genius."**

**—Rev. John Hector.**

**Early Life.** Miss Toru Dutt, the famous poetess of Bengal, was born on March 4, 1856, in the cultured Dutt family of Rambagan in Calcutta, styled by Dr. D. L. Richardson, "the Rambagan nest of singing birds." The family has produced men like Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, a distinguished statesman and historian, Mr. O. C. Dutt, an accomplished French and German scholar, and other well-known men of letters. She was the youngest child of Mr. Govin Chunder Dutt, a Christian convert, who was known to be a man possessed of sound education and great enlightenment. In her early years, she received an excellent training at home. Aru and Toru never went to school in India. They were taught by their father, who moulded their minds from their infancy, and imparted to them his own poetic tastes, and enthusiastic love of English literature. The childhood of the two girls had been spent entirely in Calcutta, and in their father's garden house at Bagmaree, with the exception of one year's sojourn, in 1863, in Bombay, to which place their father, was employed in Government

service as Assistant Comptroller-General of Accounts. Mr. Dutt thought it worth his while to afford to his daughters all the facilities for a sound education. While in her thirteenth year, in November, 1869, Toru and her elder sister Aru, accompanied their parents to Europe for their education. Young Toru had the rare privilege of travelling to the centres of learning and inspiration in the west. England, France and Italy were the places of her early visit and training. Shakespeare and Milton, Goethe and Victor Hugo were the authors she read and admired. She not only learnt English thoroughly, but studied French at Nice ; and attended lectures at Cambridge and St. Leonards. Their father, Mr. Dutt, thus writes in October, 1877 :—“ Excepting for a few months in France, Aru and Toru were never put to school, but they sedulously attended the lectures for women in Cambridge, during our stay in England. Both the sisters kept diaries of their travels in Europe, which I still possess. In the performance of all domestic duties, Aru and Toru were exemplary. No work was too mean for them. Excellent players on piano were they both, and sweet singers with clear contralto voices, ‘which I still fancy I hear at times. ’ Toru had read more, probably also thought more, and the elder sister generally appeared to follow the lead of the younger ; so that I have often been asked by strangers which of the two is Miss Dutt. And yet there was no assumption of superiority on the part of Toru. It seemed perfectly natural to Aru to fall in the background in the presence of her sister. The love between them was always perfect. Not the least remarkable trait of Toru’s mind was her wonderful memory. She could repeat almost every piece she translated by heart, and whenever there was a hitch, it was only necessary to repeat a line of the translation to put an end to it, and draw out of her lips the whole original poem in its entireness. I have already said, she

read much : she read rapidly too ; but she never slurred over a difficulty when she was reading. Dictionaries, lexicons, and encyclopaedias of all kinds were consulted until it was solved, and a note taken afterwards ; the consequence was that explanations of hard words and phrases imprinted themselves, as it were, in her brain, and whenever we had a dispute about the signification of any expression or sentence in Sanskrit, or French, or German, in seven or eight cases out of ten she would prove to be right. Sometimes I was so sure of my ground, that I would say 'well, let us lay a wager.' The wager was ordinarily a rupee. But when the authorities were consulted, she was almost always the winner. It was curious and very pleasant for me to watch her when she lost. First a bright smile, then thin fingers patting my grizzled cheek, then perhaps some quotation from Mrs. Barrett-Browning, her favourite poetess, like this—

'Ah, my gossip, you are older, and more learned, and a man' ; or some similar pleasantry. The great ambition of the sisters was to publish a novel anonymously, which Toru should write, and Aru, who was far more deft at the pencil, should illustrate. Toru's part of the contract has been faithfully fulfilled. I have before me her manuscript. It is in the form of a diary written in French by a young lady. The scene is laid in France, and the characters are all French men and women. I shall publish it probably hereafter. Aru did not live to complete her part of the undertaking. After her return to India (November, 1873), Toru commenced the study of Sanscrit along with me. We laboured hard at it, for not quite a year ; her failing health compelled me to order her to give it up. She made a few translations as we read together." Toru contributed her poetical compositions to the *Calcutta Review* and the *Bengal Magazine* both published from Calcutta. Shortly after her return from Europe, when

she was barely eighteen, she published an essay in the 'Bengal Magazine' on Loconte de Lisle, illustrated by translations into English verse. This was followed by an essay on Josephin Soulary. In July, 1874, Aru died of consumption in Calcutta at the age of twenty.

**Her Poetic Eminence.** We now proceed to setforth her poetic eminence. Her first poetical work, *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields* was first printed and published from Calcutta in 1876. Then in May, 1878, the second edition of the book was published from London by Messrs. C. Kegan Paul and Company with a touching sketch of her death written by her father. The book extends over 335 pages, and contains vigorous translations in English poems of several beautiful French sonnets written by well-known French poets, with critical notes at the end. Some of the poems have almost the beauty and vigour of the original, showing considerable acquaintance with French and English literatures ; and the book was very favourably reviewed in the English and French Press.

After her death, a volume of original verscs in manuscript was found among Toru's papers, which was published in London, in 1881, under the title of *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan*, consisting of several poems composed chiefly on Indian lives and characters of olden days, showing her excellent knowledge of Sanscrit literature. "The nine ballads which can be read with unabated interest in a couple of hours show to us the love and esteem which Toru had for ancient Hindu traditions, ideals and conventions. The poems interest us by bringing home to our minds the sacred treasures embedded in early Hindu books through the vehicle of English verse. The stories narrated with great force and feeling reveal to us the strength of the poetess, while occasional faults here and there of versification betray to us her weak-

ness. We see throughout genius combating with ignorance and imagination struggling with inexperience. At times we find melody sacrificed to sense and beauty, to felicity of expression. On the whole the merit, strength and passion of the poems appeal to us more forcibly than the occasional crudity and faults of style." In writing an introductory memoir for the book, the eminent critic, Mr. Edmund W. Gosse says : "It is difficult to exaggerate when we try to estimate what we have lost in the premature death of Toru Dutt. Literature has no honours which need have been beyond the grasp of a girl who at the age of twenty-one, and in languages separated from her own by so deep a chasm, had produced so much of lasting worth. \* \* \* When the history of the literature of our country comes to be written, there is sure to be a page in it dedicated to this fragile exotic blossom of song." This book has been very favourably received in England, and has passed through several editions.

The nine poems are 'Savitri', 'Lakshman,' 'Jogadhya Uma', 'The Royal Ascetic and the Hind', 'Dhruva', 'Buttoo', 'Sindhu', 'Prehlad' and 'Sita.' A critic writes : "In *Savitri* we find portrayed the flower of ancient Hindu womanhood. Unlike her sisters of the present day, Savitri, true to the ancient Aryan spirit, is allowed her free will in the choice of her husband. She sets her affections on Prince Satyavan. Neither the exhortations of her father, nor the threats of Narada could shake her determination. Savitri would have no one but Satyavan for her lord, though the life of the prince was ordained by the Fate to terminate within a year after the marriage. She succeeds and the marriage is celebrated with great eclat. Henceforth lived the couple with all the simplicity, beauty and charm characteristic of the ancient Aryan home. Savitri entwines herself as a creeper in the arms of her beloved. Separation from her lord she cannot

brook even for a moment, and she would even follow the soul of her lord when it is snatched away by Yama, the God of Death. The fidelity of Savitri extorts the admiration of Death, and Prince Satyavan is ultimately brought back to life to be happy again with his Consort". In the poem *Lakshman* she has told the story of the young prince setting out to the rescue of his brother Rama in obedience to the wishes of Sita, when Rama followed the golden stag to catch it for his wife, Sita. *Jogadhyā Uma* is a beautiful little poem in which the vision of the mystic Being is revealed through the agency of a pedlar selling shell-bracelets. The two poems, *The Royal ascetic and the Hind* and *The Legend of Dhruva* are translations of stories from the Vishnu-Purana, and rhymed octosyllabic ballads. The former points out the futility of an ascetic life to one who aspires to a higher life in the world beyond. In the poem entitled 'The Legend of Dhruva', she describes beautifully the treatment which Dhruva received from his step-mother, Suruchee. 'Sindhu' and 'Buttoo,' 'Prehlad' and 'Sita', the last four of the ballads, show a superior finish and diction, and also a more sustained brilliancy of form. In her poem 'Sindhu', the poetess thus describes the scenery of jungle at sunset when darkness was gradually spreading on in which Emperor Dasaratha went out hunting :—

"Upon the glassy surface fell  
 The last beams of the day,  
 Like fiery darts, that lengthening swell,  
 As breezes wake and play.

Osiers and Willows on the edge  
 And purple buds and red,  
 Leant down,-- and 'mid the pale green sedge  
 The lotus raised its head.

And softly, softly, hour by hour  
 Light faded, and a veil  
 Fell over tree, and wave, and flower,  
 On came the twilight pale.

Deeper and deeper grew the shades,  
 Stars glimmered in the sky,  
 The nightingale along the glades  
 Raised her preluding cry.

\* \* \* \*

As darkness settled like a pall  
 The eye would pierce in vain,  
 The fire-flies gemmed the bushes all,  
 Like fiery drops of rain.

As she has described the ideal wife *Savitri*, so has she given the pathetic tale of a dutiful son, *Sindhu*, the only son of his blind and helpless parents, who was shot by mistake by Emperor Dasaratha, while in an evening twilight he went to the river for filling the pitcher of water for his blind parents who were living in the neighbouring woods. The boy thus cried :—

Ah me ! what means this ?—Hark a cry,  
 A feeble human wail,  
 Oh God ! it said—I die,—I die,  
 Who'll carry home the pail ?

In the last agony of death, he expressed the following noblest sentiments :—

And so I die—a bloody death—  
 But not for this I mourn,  
 To feel the world pass with my breath  
 I gladly could have borne,

But for my parents, who are blind,  
 And have no other stay,—  
 This, this, weighs sore upon my mind,  
 And fills me with dismay.

In her poem 'Buttoo,' she has described the story of a low-born and skilfull warrior. The sonnet, *The Lotus* and the poem on *Our Casuarina Tree* in her 'Ballads and Legends' are beautiful poetic pieces, the outbursts of poetic genius.

**As a Great French Writer.** A few months before her death, Mademoiselle Clarisse Bader's excellent work, "La Femme dans L'Inde Antique" (woman in Ancient India), attracted her attention on the approbation of the French Academy and read it with great delight. She liked it so much that she wrote to the authoress for permission to translate it into English. "The correspondence which thus ensued, engendered a warm friendship between these two young women, widely separated by race and language, but closely allied by the many excellent qualities of head and heart which they possessed in common. Toru's letters to her friend which are written in French, have a charming naïvete quite characteristic of her sweet and child-like disposition." A translation of one of these letters, as was rendered by a distinguished relative of the poetess, is reproduced below, excluding only the postscript :—

Calcutta, 18th March, 1877.

Dear Mademoiselle,

I thank you most sincerely for your kind permission to translate "La Femme dans L'Inde Antique" and also for your kind and sympathetic letter which has caused me the keenest pleasure.

I am grieved not to have been able to commence the translation yet ; but my constitution is not very strong ;

more than two years ago, I contracted an obstinate cough which does not leave me. However, I hope to put my hand to the work very soon.

I cannot tell you, Mademoiselle, how your affection—for you love them ; your book and your letter sufficiently testify it—for my countrywomen and my country touches me ; and I am proud to be able to say that the heroines of our great epochs are worthy of all honour and love. Is there a character more touching and amiable than Sita ? I do not think so. When I hear my mother chant, in the evening, the old lays of our country, I almost always weep. The lament of Sita when, banished for the second time, she wanders about in the vast forest, alone, with despair and terror in her soul, is so pathetic that I believe there is no one who can hear it without shedding tears. I send you herewith two short translations from that beautiful ancient language, the Sanskrit. Unfortunately, since the last six months, I have been obliged to give up translating from the Sanskrit. My health does not permit my continuing the translations. I send you also the portrait of myself and my sister. In the photograph she is shewn seated. She was so sweet and so good ! The photograph was taken four years ago when I was seventeen, and she barely nineteen. I shall be grateful to you, Mademoiselle, if you also will be good enough to send me your photograph. I shall keep it as one of my most valued treasures.

I must stop here. I do not wish to encroach on your time any more. Like M. Lefévre-Deumier, I would say,—

‘ Adieu, then, my friend, whom I ne’er have beheld,’ for, Mademoiselle, I count you among my friends, and the best of them too,—although I have not seen you.

Please accept Mademoiselle, the fresh assurance of my friendship.

Toru Dutt.

“Toru did not live to finish the translation of *La Femme dans L’Inde Antique*. In fact, she had scarcely commenced it, when the fatal malady which had, for some time, been undermining her constitution, suddenly developed itself, and she was confined to her bed. Although obliged to give up writing, she did not cease to read the latest European books, and followed with interest the proceedings of the Société Asiatique of Paris. Her last short letter to Mademoiselle Bader, written on the 30th of July, 1877, is pathetic in its simplicity, and shews that, like all consumptive patients, she was unconscious of the approaching end, and entertained, to the last, a delusive hope of her recovery. ‘I have been very ill, dear Mademoiselle,’—wrote she to her friend,—‘but God, in His goodness, has heard the prayers of my parents and I am recovering little by little. I hope to write to you at great length, before long.’ But the summons had come. The Angel of ‘The Tree of Life’ had placed a wreath of immortal sprays on her brow.”

Some time after the death of Toru, the sorrow-stricken father on examining her papers, found manuscripts of some complete and some incomplete works, which were published by him. Among the papers discovered were a selection from the sonnets of the Comte de Grammont, translated into English, and an unfinished romance written in English, and entitled “Bianca, or the young Spanish maiden,”—which were published in two Calcutta Magazines. The most remarkable book that she left unpublished was *Le Journal de Mademoiselle D’Arrers*, a complete novel written in French. It was published by Didier in France, in 1879, forming a handsome volume of 259 pages, with a prefatory notice of Toru’s life and works by her friend, Mademoiselle Clarisse Bader, who says, “without ever having seen Toru, I loved her. Her letters revealed a frankness, sensibility, and charming good-

ness and simplicity, which endeared her to me, and shewed me the native qualities of the Hindu woman developed and transformed by the Christian civilization of Europe. And how could I rest insensible to such spontaneous and ardent affection evinced for me, across the distant seas, by a descendant of those Indian women who had inspired the work of the twenty-second year of my life?" It is a tragic novel of great beauty and power. The scene of the story is laid in France, and the characters are all French men and women. "The work is a wonderful monument of Toru's genius. It not only shews with what perfect grace and facility this young Bengali girl could write a foreign language, like French,— but also discloses a rare power of characterization and of delineating scenes of tragic passion, as well as of idyllic sweetness." The *Saturday Review* of London, in noticing the work thus spoke of the distinguished authoress :—

"There is every reason to believe that, in intellectual power, Toru Dutt was one of the most remarkable women that ever lived. Had George Sand or George Eliot died at the age of twenty-one, they would certainly not have left behind them any proof either of application or of originality superior to those bequeathed to us by Toru Dutt ; and we discover little of merely ephemeral precocity in the attainments of this singular girl."

**Her Premature End.** Toru died also of consumption on the evening of August 30, 1877. Both the sisters were unmarried and were known to be good musicians. Within a short career of twenty-one years, Toru was able to achieve a literary success, which might well appear as a marvel in one with a longer lease of life. This was possible partly on account of the innate genius of the girl and partly on account of the attendant circumstances of her birth. The works of Toru Dutt will ever be read with abiding interest, constituting

an enduring monument for herself and taking a very high place in the history of world's literatures. Lord Lytton, then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, was one of the first to offer his condolence to the bereaved father, and to sympathise with him for the irreparable loss he had sustained.

**Appreciations of Her Greatness.** "It is difficult,"—says M. James Darmesteter, "to exaggerate the loss which the Indian Muse has sustained in losing Toru Dutt. \* \* \* This child of Bengal so admirably and so strangely gifted, Hindu by race and by tradition, an English woman by education, a French woman at heart; poet in English, prose-writer in French; who at the age of eighteen made known in India the poets of France in the rhyme of England, who blended in herself three souls and three traditions, and died at the age of twenty, in the full bloom of her talent and on the eve of the awakening of her genius, presents in the history of literature, a phenomenon without parallel,— and her name should rest particularly dear to that France which she loved so well, and towards which she was drawn by a mysterious instinct."

"A charming poem signed R. K. M., appeared in the *Statesman* of Calcutta about a year and a half after Toru's death. The writer represents Death putting an end to the contention between England, France and India, each claiming Toru as her own." We shall quote below the last stanza of this poem :—

"Truce to vain strife ! 'Tis all out of season,  
 I carry our song-bird back to its nest,  
 Question me not ;—'twere highest of treason,  
 This is God's will, and that will is the best.  
 Back to its home,—and smiling the Reaper  
 • Bearing the song-bird, for burden, upsprings !  
 A long trail of light — then a darkness deeper,  
 And a silence that followed the rush of his wings."

A critic in the course of his appreciation of the merit of her songs and poems, has truly remarked :—

“Her love of nature and her keen appreciation of its beauties are visible in all her productions. The delicacy and lightness of touch displayed in her verse bear testimony to her faultless and refined poetic taste, and the music of her poetry is not the least negligible feature of her work. She cannot be accused of want of simplicity and her verse is a spontaneous outburst, from beginning to end—a virtue which is perhaps the fundamental requisite of all true poetry. Critics of poetry are bound to acknowledge the existence of these and similar merits in her work and they cannot in any fairness deny the term “poetry” to verse of such a superior rank.

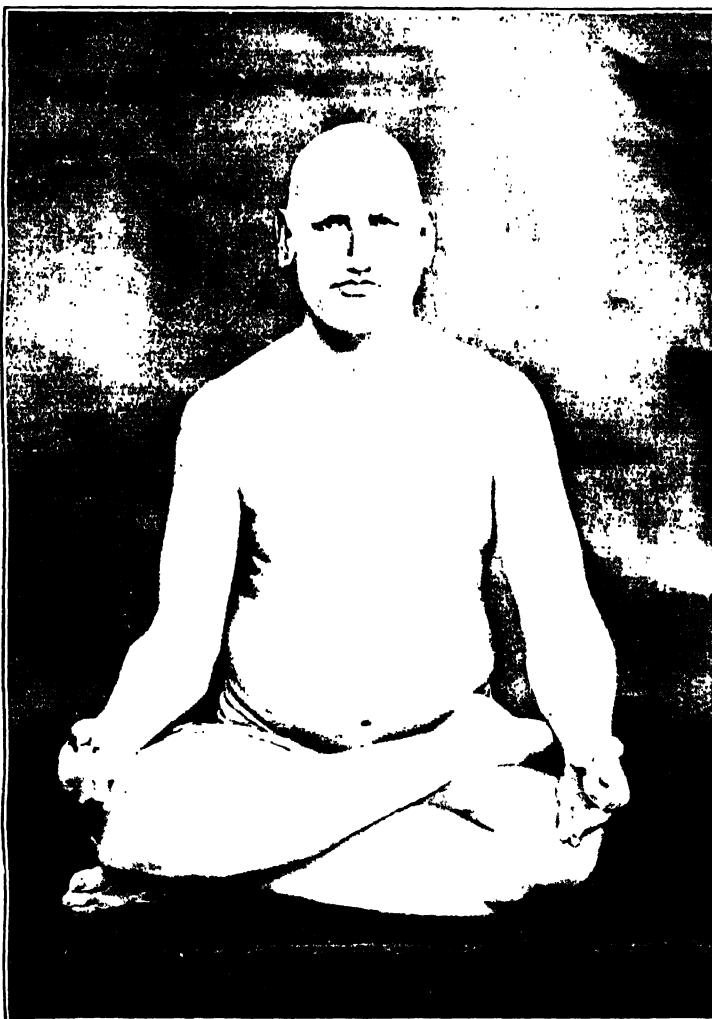
There is no necessity to plead for indulgence, in the critical estimate of the poetical work of a person like Toru who like the hero of *In Memoriam* “perished in the green.” The poetical treasure bequeathed by her is too valuable to sink into oblivion and she has exhibited within its short compass, many of the essential virtues of a genuine poet. She is one of those “inheritors of unfulfilled renown,” as Shelley calls them, and India will always continue to cherish with love, the memory of this ‘half-blown floweret’ of song.”

The Rev. John Hector in the course of his appreciative notice, contributed in the *S. C. College Magazine* of March, 1911, on “Toru Dutt,” writes : “The regret that rises within me as I read Toru’s little volume of poems is, after all, not that so much early promise was prematurely blighted, but that the millions of Toru Dutt’s Indian sisters are still kept to such an extent in the bonds of ignorance and superstition.” Another critic on the poetical works of Miss Toru Dutt said : “If the critic of art examines with sympathy and humanity the maiden productions of Toru, he would be compelled to recognise in them promise of a high order, which would have given the

authoress a place among the poets of the world if Providence had been only pleased to give time for this early promise to bloom and to mature. Not quarrelling with fate or Providence for the early exit from this world of young Toru, we shall attempt to form a literary estimate of her poetry that appeals to us strongly by its simplicity, melody and grace. \* \* The career of Toru opens to us a long vista of poetic possibilities in the future. We are led to imagine that the Muse of English poetry is as ready and willing to inspire her votaries in this country, as she is to inspire a Keats, a Shelley or a Wordsworth. We are constrained to think that Hindu traditions and Indian scenery could furnish themes for poetry to one possessed of an artistic skill, emotional fervour and poetic fancy as Toru—the early faded flower of inspired humanity. A feeling of cheery optimism carries us forward and we seem to be assured of the dawn of a golden era of literary fellowship between the East and the West."

---





**Swami Dayanand Saraswati.**

*Born—1824.      Died—1883.*

## SWAMI DAYANAND SARASWATI.

"Religious fervour, almost at white-heat, bordering on the verge of self-abnegation, a daring and adventurous spirit born of a confidence that a higher power than man's protected him and his work, the magnetism of superior genius which binds men together, a rare insight into the real needs of the times and a steadfastness of purpose, which no adverse turn of fortune could conquer, a readiness and resourcefulness rarely met with either in European or Indian history of religious revival, true patriotism which was far in advance of the times and a sense of justice tempered with mercy—these were the sources of the strength that enabled him to organise a great movement as Arya Samaj."

—M. G. Ranade.

**Early life and Religious turn of his mind.** Among the religious reformers in India, the name of Swami Dayanand stands pre-eminent. His teachings and preachings had organised and inspired a movement of vast religious significance in the way of establishment of Arya Samaj in India. Dayanand was born in the year 1824, in a village in the State of Morvi in Kathiawar in a shawite family of the Andicha sect of Brahmins, and he was originally named Mulshankar. His father, Ambashankar, was a landholder of affluent circumstances, and held the hereditary office of Revenue Collector of the State and carried on a lucrative business as a money-lender and banker. He was known to be an intelligent and hard-working, and a devout worshipper of Shiva ( the God of destruction ) and Lakshmi (the Goddess of wealth). When Mulshankar was hardly five years old, he was taught the Devanagiri alphabet, and the select shlokas from sacred works, according to the time-honoured traditional methods. In his eighth year, he was invested with sacred thread and learned

the Gayatri hymn. He said : "As my father belonged to the Siva sect, I was early taught to worship the uncouth piece of clay representing Siva, known as the Parthiva Linga. My mother, fearing for my health, opposed my observing the daily fasts enjoined on the worshippers of Siva, and as my father sternly insisted on them, frequent quarrels arose between my parents. Meanwhile, I studied Sanskrit grammar, learnt the Vedas by heart, and accompanied my father in his visits to the shrines and temples of Siva. My father looked upon the worship of Siva as the most divine of all religions. My difficulties began when my father insisted on initiating me in the worship of the Parthiva Linga. As a preparation for this solemn act I was made to fast ; I had thus to follow my father for a night's vigil in the temple of Siva. The Vigil is divided into four parts, consisting of three hours each. When I had watched six hours I observed about midnight that the temple servants and some of the devotees, after having left the inner temple, had fallen asleep. Knowing that this would destroy all the good effects of the service, I kept awake myself, when I observed that even my father had fallen asleep. When I was there left alone I began to meditate. Is it possible, I asked myself, that this idol I see bestriding his bull before me, and who, according to all accounts, walks about, eats, sleeps, drinks, holds a trident in his hand, beats the drum, and can pronounce curses on men, can be the great deity, the Mahadeva, the Supreme Being ? Unable to resist such thoughts any longer I roused my father, asking him to tell me whether this hideous idol was the great god of the scriptures. 'Why do you ask ?' said my father. 'Because,' I answered, 'I feel it impossible to reconcile the idea of an omnipotent living God with this idol, which allows the mice to run over his body, and thus suffers himself to be polluted

without the slightest protest.' Then my father tried to explain to me that this stone image of the Mahadeva, having been consecrated by the holy Brahmans, became, in consequence, the god himself, adding that as Siva cannot be perceived personally in this Kali-Yuga, we have the idol in which the Mahadeva is imagined by his votaries. I was not satisfied in my mind, but feeling faint with hunger and fatigue, I begged to be allowed to go home. Though warned by my father not to break my fast, I could not help eating the food which my mother gave me, and then fell asleep. When my father returned he tried to impress me with the enormity of the sin I had committed in breaking my fast. But my faith in the idol was gone, and all I could do was to try to conceal my lack of faith, and devote all my time to study.

There were besides me in our family two younger sisters and two brothers, the youngest of them being born when I was sixteen. On one memorable night one of my sisters, a girl of fourteen, died quite suddenly. It was my first bereavement, and the shock to my heart was very great. While friends and relatives were sobbing and lamenting around me, I stood like one petrified, and plunged in a profound dream. 'Not one of the beings that ever lived in this world could escape the cold hand of death,' I thought; 'I too may be snatched away at any time and die. Whither then shall I turn to alleviate this human misery? Where shall I find the assurance of, and means of attaining Moksha, the final bliss?' It was then and there that I came to the determination that I would find it, cost whatever it might, and thus save myself from the untold miseries of the dying moments of an unbeliever. I now broke for ever with the mummeries of fasting and penance, but I kept my innermost thoughts a secret from everybody. Soon after, an uncle, a very learned man, who

had shown me great kindness, died also, his death leaving me with a still profounder conviction that there was nothing stable, nothing worth living for in this world.

At this time my parents wished to betroth me. The idea of married life had always been repulsive to me, and with great difficulty I persuaded my father to postpone my betrothal till the end of the year. Though I wished to go to Benares to carry on my study of Sanskrit, I was not allowed to do so, but was sent to an old priest, a learned Pandit, who resided about six miles from our town. There I remained for some time till I was summoned home to find every thing ready for my marriage. I was then 21, and as I saw no other escape, I resolved to place an eternal bar between myself and marriage.

Soon after I secretly left my home and succeeded in escaping from a party of horsemen whom my father had sent after me. While travelling on foot, I was robbed by a party of begging Brahmans of all I possessed, being told by them that the more I gave away in charities, the more my self-denial would benefit me in the next life. After some time I arrived at Sayla where I knew of a learned scholar, Lala Bhagat Ram, and I determined to join his order. On my initiation I received the name of Suddha Chaitanya (pure thought), and had to wear a reddish yellow garment. In this new attire I went to a small principality near Ahmedabad, where to my misfortune I met with a *Bairagi* (ascetic), well acquainted with my family. Having found out that I was on my way to a *Mela* held at Sidhpur, he informed my father; and while I was staying in the temple of Mahadeva at Nilakanth, with Daradi Swami and other students, I was suddenly confronted by my father. In spite of all my entreaties he handed me over as a prisoner to some Sepoys whom he had brought with him on purpose. However, I

succeeded in escaping once more, and making my way back to Ahmedabad, I proceeded to Baroda. There I settled for some time, and at Chetan Math (a temple) held several discourses with Brahmananda, and a number of Brahmacharins and Sannyasins on the Vedanta philosophy. From Brahmananda I learnt clearly that I am Brahma, the jiva (soul) and Brahma being one. I then repaired to Benares and made the acquaintance of some of the best scholars there. By their advice I afterwards proceeded to a place on the banks of the Narbada. I was placed under the tuition of Paramananda Paramahansa, studying such books as the *Vedanta-sara*, *Vedanta-paribhasha*, &c. I felt anxious to become a Sannyasin, and though I was very young, I was with some difficulty consecrated, and received the staff of the Sannyasin. My name was then changed into Dayananda Sarasvati. After some time I proceeded to Vyasarama to study Yoga under Yogananda, I then spent more time in practising Yoga, but in order acquire to the highest perfection in Yoga, I had to return to the neighbourhood of Ahmedabad, where two Yogins imparted to me the final secrets of *Yoga-vidya*. I then travelled to the mountain of Abu in Rajputana, to acquire some new modes of Yoga, and in 1855 joined a great meeting at Hardwar, where many sages and philosophers met for the study and practice of Yoga. At Tidee, where I spent some time, I was horrified at meeting with meat-eating Brahmans, still more at reading some of their sacred books, the Tantras which sanction every kind of immorality."

**His Travels.** Thus, we see, that in his fourteenth year, that the seed of spiritual awakening was first sown in his mind on the night of the *Shivaratri*, and his admirers celebrate that day as the *Dayananda Bodha Utsara* in honour of the event. In his twenty-fourth year, his third and last name

(the first two being Mulshankar and Suddha Chaitanya) Swami Dayanand Saraswati was given to him by Swami Purnananda, a Sannyasin of Maharashtra. In the course of his extensive wanderings, he found two ascetics, who were known to him as Jwalanand Puri and Shivanand Giri who taught him the way of attaining beatitude through the practice of *Yoga*. During the troublous time of the Sepoy Mutiny Dayanand was in deep meditation on the banks of the Narbada river. He then thought that the scientific study of the Hindu *Shastras* and their rationalistic interpretation were quite indispensable for the revival of Hindu religion. He was anxious to know the correct interpretation of the Vedas, the sublimity of the philosophy of the Upanishads and to pick up the gems of the Darshanas. Fortunately for him, he heard the name of Swami Virjanand Saraswati, a great Vedic scholar of Northern India, who was maintaining a school of his own at Muttra. Dayanand at the age of 36 visited Muttra and began his studies in the school of Swami Virjanand from November 14, 1860. A writer in describing the career of Dayanand in this Vedic Institution, wrote :—“He was a blind monk, an ardent ascetic and a profound Vedic scholar. At one time he was under the patronage of the Prince of Alwar. Were it not for his choleric temper and self-willed nature, the monk would have passed the remainder of his life-time under the roof of the Raja in peace and plenty. But he was destined to do and achieve something great and glorious in this world. He was no doubt a scholar but his physical infirmities were too great for him to be able to set right a world so full of malice, hatred, ignorance and bigotry. His tremendous enthusiasm and his mighty energy were only to find a proper channel and when once he would infuse that spirit in a worthy disciple his mission in life would be fulfilled. His name then

would find a permanent place in the muster-roll of the benefactors of humanity. \* \* On the slightest pretext he sometimes would kick Dayanand out of his house. For a trivial offence or for the neglect of duty, his stern rod would descend upon the body of Dayanand. \* \* In spite of all this, he served his tutor diligently, he patiently bore all the miseries, he fetched water for the *guru* from a great distance, he swept his room and washed his clothes as well. In spare moments, he learnt *Mahabhashya* and other works of *Rishis*. For a period of about two years and a half he sat at his feet and drank deep at the founts of immortal learning. At last, the parting day came. The *chela* with a few cloves in his hand for which the *guru* had great fondness approached him to bid a farewell and said, 'My revered Guru, I am a poor man and have nothing more to give you.' 'No, Dayanand,' replied his Guru, 'I am anxious that you should part with something that you possess. Go thou, my disciple and make a proper use of the education you have acquired. There is ignorance in the land. People do not know the right from the wrong. They wrangle about castes and creeds and neglect the study of the *Vedas*. Teach them to study the true books, to believe in one God and in one religion taught by the *Vedas*.' Dayanand on receiving the message took a vow that he would consecrate his life to the cause of the revival of the vedic religion in India as was laid down by the *rishis*, and thus created a religious revolution in North-Western India. The path of a reformer being always thorny, Dayanand had to meet with the bitterest opposition from the ignorant members of the Hindu community, and even he was not spared the throwing of stones at him and had to escape from several attempts on his life. But as is usual with such cases, he was able to make favourable impressions on the minds of educated people, so good many followers were gradually drawn to him. From

Mutra he went to Agra, where he delivered several addresses condemning idolatry and such other practices prevalent among the Hindus. Next, in 1865, he proceeded to Gwalior, where cholera was then raging in a virulent form. Here he pointed out that as a treatise on Theology, *Bhagrat Gita* bears no comparison with the Vedas and the Upanishads. In 1866, he went to Ajmer, where he also delivered his stirring lectures on Vedic religion and discoursed on religious subjects. He is said to have suggested to the then Commissioner of Ajmer, the necessity of removing social evils by means of legislation and requested another high official to put a stop to cow-killing in India. A great fair in the name of *Kumbha-mela* is held every twelve years at Hardwar, a sacred place to the Hindus. It is a mela of Hindu Yogis and devotees who assemble together in large number for meditation and discussion of religious subjects. The year in which the mela is held is considered by the Hindus to be an auspicious year for taking religious inspirations from the Yogis who are generally religious teachers. Here millions of Indian people flock together from all parts of the country for the purpose of bathing in the river, which is supposed to purge their souls of all their sins and help them to lead to *Moksha*, that is, Heaven. Dayanand with some of his followers was present at the fair which came off in 1867, and preached his faith. In the following year (1868), he carried on his work at Kanauj and Farrukhabad where the orthodox Brahmins went so far as to spread a rumour that Dayanand was a Christian Missionary in the garb of a Sannayasin and his object was to convert the Hindus to the Christian faith. They went a step further by excommunicating those who heard his preaching and prescribing *prayaschitam* (penance) in several cases. In July, 1869, he in the course of his wanderings reached Cawnpore and issued his manifestoes declaring that

Vedas did not sanction the worship of idols and that the Puranas were not authoritative publications in religious matters, which the orthodox class received with great indignation. The leaders of the oppositionists thought it advisable to convene a public meeting for debating with him his faith and declaring him vehemently a religious fanatic. Dayanand accepted the challenge cheerfully. Accordingly a grand meeting was held at Cawnpore on July 31, 1869, under the chairmanship of Mr. W. Thaire, I.C.S. Joint-Magistrate of the station, who was known to be a Sanskrit scholar of repute. The meeting came off on the appointed day and Mr. Thaire decided in favour of Swami Dayanand and observed : "Dayanand's arguments were in accordance with the Vedas and he won the day." From Cawnpore he repaired to Benares, where he preached the vedic faith and also discussed it in a public debate. In response to an invitation sent to him, Dayanand went to Calcutta in December, 1872. He delivered many lectures there in Sanskrit on different topics, which created favourable impressions on the minds of Brahmo leaders, namely, Keshab Chandra Sen and Devendra Nath Tagore. He spoke on the 'philosophy of Darshanas' and proved that the Sankhya Darshana was not atheistic as was believed by many Sanskrit scholars. Leaving Calcutta on April 1, 1873, he arrived at Hooghly where he held a debate on 'Idolatry' with Pandit Taracharan. He thence proceeded to Cawnpore and Farrukhabad for the second time, and in the course of an interview with the then head of the local Government (Sir Charles Muir) urged the necessity of the protection of cows in an agricultural country as India. A sympathetic officer, as he was, after hearing him with attention, promised to direct his mind towards the subject. In the latter part of the said year, the laborious and energetic reformer delivered many of his religious lectures in such places as Aligarh, Brindavan and Muttra. Swami Dayanand remained

in Allahabad till the end of September, 1874, and in response to an invitation from some gentlemen of light and leading in Bombay, he reached there early in November of the same year passing through Nasik and Jubbulpore. Leaving the capital of the Western Presidency, Dayanand went to Ahmedabad and Rajkot, which he left on January 18, 1875, for proceeding to Bombay for the second time. His teachings created a favourable impression also at Bombay and his admirers there were the first in the country to establish a society for learning and diffusing his principles which has now developed into a mighty tree called the Arya Samaj with many branches all over the country. In that year he delivered some 15 lectures at Poona on various subjects, such as "the Transmigration of Souls," "the Vedas", "the Idolatry," but his preachings did not produce the desired effect. He visited the Panjab first in 1877, where within two months of his appearance, his preachings touched effectively the minds of all classes of the people. He then undertook long tours and visited many towns in the Panjab as Gurdaspur, Rawalpindi, Multan, Wazirabad, Jhelum and Guzerat, and delivered his lectures. In 1878, he left the Punjab for the United Provinces, where he visited many towns and did his mission works with usual zeal and earnestness. In the following year, he conducted a debate with missionaries at Bareilly. In 1880, he proceeded to Meerut where he met Pandita Ramabai, Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott.

**The Establishment of the Arya Samaj.** But the most glorious work of his life was that of the foundation of the Arya Samaj. We have already seen that in the course of his second visit to Bombay in 1875, the Arya Samaj was first established at a public meeting held on the 10th April, where 28 rules were laid down for observance by the followers of the Samaj. We have also seen that his visit to the Panjab

produced the hopeful result, as many sections of the people did appreciate the value of his teachings. Accordingly, the first Samaj in the Province was established on June 26, 1877, at Lahore with some gentlemen of light and leading as members and office-bearers. Here the 28 rules as were framed in Bombay were changed to 10 new principles, which are still followed by the members of the Arya Samaj. These new rules are reproduced below :—

1.—God is the primary cause of all true knowledge, and of everything is known by its means.

2.—God is All-truth, All-knowledge, All-beautitude, Incorporeal, Almighty, Just, Merciful Unbegotten, Infinite, Unchangeable, without a beginning, Incomparable, the support and the Lord of all, All-pervading, Omniscient, Imperishable : Immortal, Exempt from fear, Eternal, Holy and the Cause of the universe. To Him alone worship is due.

3.—The Vedas are the Books of true knowledge, and it is the paramount duty of every Arya to read or hear them read, to teach and preach them to others.

4.—One should always be ready to accept truth and renounce untruth.

5.—All actions ought to be done conformably to virtue, *i.e.*, after a thorough consideration of right and wrong.

6.—The primary object of the Samaj is to do good to the world by improving the physical, spiritual and social condition of mankind.

7.—All ought to be treated with love, justice and due regard to their merits.

8.—Ignorance ought to be dispelled and knowledge diffused.

9.—No one ought to be contented with his own good alone; but every one ought to regard his prosperity as included in that of others.

10.—In matters which affect the general social well-being of the whole society one ought to discard all differences and not allow his individuality to interfere, but in strictly personal matters every one may act with freedom.

The marvellous progress that the Samaj has made in India may be realised from the fact that within 30 years of its establishment it had over 300 branches in the Punjab ; 280 in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh ; 36 in Central India ; 30 in Bengal and Behar ; 14 in Bombay ; 6 in the Madras Presidency ; 6 in Burma ; 1 in Assam ; and 3 in British East Africa. The Arya Samaj do not confine its activity to religion alone, but undertake some vital objects in spreading education and relieving human sufferings. The most important and useful institution that has been established through the efforts of the members of the Arya Samaj, was the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College at Lahore in 1884, in memory of the founder of the great Samaj. The accumulated funds in the hands of the Trustees in 1905 were more than five lakhs of rupees paid by the followers of the Samaj, showing the earnest devotion of the people of the Province. Moral and religious education is specially imparted to the students of the College. We cannot but mention here the patriotic zeal of the students shown at such trying moments as the great Indian Famine of 1897 and the disaster at Dharamsala and Kangra. Besides this excellent College, the Arya Samaj maintains a very large number of educational institutions, and started orphanages in Upper India, and has some newspapers and magazines of its own. We quote an extract from what Pandit Vishnu Lal Sharma, M. A., has written on 'the theology of the Arya Samaj' in his brochure headed *A Hand-Book of the Arya Samaj* : "The theology of the Arya Samaj may be summed up in one word *viz.* 'The Vedas.' The Arya Samaj lit. 'the society of the good and the noble' is a body of men and

women, who believe in the existence of God and the divine origin of the Vedas. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, was never tired of repeating that the religion which he professed and preached was not a new religion invented by himself, but that believed in by the ancient sages from the creation of the world to the time of Jaimini, the celebrated author of the Purva Mimansa. It was the religion professed by Kapila, the propounder of the Saankhya ; by Gautama, the author of the Nyaya ; by Vyasa, the author of the Vedanta ; by Harish Chandra, the truthful, and by the immortal Krishna."

**As a Social Reformer.** Swami Dayanand Saraswati was not only a great religious organiser but a staunch social reformer. Among the social evils of the Hindus which attracted his prominent attention were the evils of caste-system ; the deplorable condition of women ; the mental, physical, and moral degradation of the youths ; and the worship of idols. He condemned early marriage, and dealt with the question in these words :—"The best time for a girl's marriage is when she is from 16 to 24 years of age and for a youth when he is 25 to 48 years of age. The marriage of a girl of 16 and a youth of 25 is of the lowest order ; of a girl of 18 or 20 years and a youth of 30, 35, or 40 years is of the middle order and of a maid of 24 and a bachelor of 48 is of the best kind. The impregnation of a woman less than 16 years of age by a man less than 25 years of age is subject to misfortune. Even if the child be born, it will never be healthy. So, the conception of a minor should never be encouraged." He was of opinion that the system of early marriages is responsible for the physical deterioration of the Hindu Race and he contrasts the state of Arya-Varta before and after the introduction of this baneful system : "The country of Arya-Varta enjoyed prosperity and progress so long as all the sages, philosophers,

princes, emperors and people in general acquired knowledge during the time of their vow of bachelorship and observed the custom of marriage in which a maid, (*a Brahmacharinee*) selected a suitable husband for herself in *Swayam Vara*. But when the aquisition of knowledge in the Brahmacharyashrama ceased and the contraction of early marriages became the custom, national degeneracy and physical deterioration set in. \* \* Hence, this evil custom should be given up." His opinion on widow-marriage may be ascertained from the following passage :—"Men and women whose marriage ceremony only is performed and who have had no sexual intercourse should marry again in case one of the party happen to die. Men and women of the Dwija class who have had conjugal intercourse should not marry again after the death of their consorts. \* \* Men and women should lead a chaste life and on the failure of issue they should adopt a son in order to continue the line of descent. If they cannot keep up their chastity, they can beget children by the *Niyoga* form of marriage (temporary nuptial contract.)" As regards foreign travel, he remarked : "The people of Arya-Varta did undertake journeys to foreign countries for purposes of commerce and with a view to settle disputes on international affairs. The present dread of the destruction of purity and religion are due to ignorance. By paying visits to foreign countries one learns much about the manners and customs of people inhabiting those regions."

**The Swami's Writings.** Besides his religious teachings, Dayanand devoted some of the later years of his life to the publication of religious books. He wrote a commentary in Sanskrit and Hindustani on the Yajurveda and on five *ashtakas* out of the eight of the Rig Veda. The Swami also wrote some other works on theology and Sanskrit Grammar, the most popular of which are the *Veda Bhashya Bhumika*, treating of enquiries into the different religions prevalent in India ;

and the *Satyartha Prakasha* dealing with exhaustive enquiry into the Vedic religion. The *Veda Bhashya Bhumika* is an introduction to the manifestation of true meanings of the *Vedas*; and has been published in English, Hindi and Urdu characters. The *Satyartha Prakasha* was originally written in Hindustani, but has since been translated into other languages as English, Bengali, Urdu, Marathi and Gurmukhi. The book entitled *Sanskrit Vidhi* is a compendium of rituals of the 16 ceremonies obligatory on each Hindu. His work *Vedanga Prakash* is a masterly edition of Sanskrit Grammar. All his works and writings extend over several thousand pages.

**The Teachings of Swami Dayanand.** The life of Swami Dayanand Saraswati is a record of a keen struggle with prevailing Hinduism. Two of the writers have thus described the teachings of Dayanand :—

“The *Vedas*, he preached, were the pure fountain of all true knowledge, while the prevailing religions owed their birth to the ignorance which followed after the study of the *Vedas* had fallen into neglect. He claimed that the germs of all true knowledge necessary for man were contained in the *Vedas* and he brought forward passages from them containing beautiful references to mathematics, astronomy and other physical sciences, domestic arts and requirements, laws and institutions for perfect happiness, a perfect code of morality and above all the most sublime conception of the Maker of the Universe. He proved to demonstration that the oldest book in the library of the world, was also the most truthful, and that unlike other books, which with all their fantastic and the natural dogmas passed for revelation, it was a faithful mirror and exponent of the laws on which the Universe is built and governed. \* \* The explanation given by the Swami was simple as well as convincing. He maintained that Vedic words were not to be taken in their popular

but in their radical sense. For example, the prayer to *Agni* were not meant as invocations to a subordinate deity called *Agni* or to fire, but to Agni, the Self-Extinguent and All-knowing Being, worthy of adoration.”

“He in all humility preached that his was a religion based on the true, eternal and universal doctrines embodied in the Vedas. \*\* Revival of the Vedic religion was the end and aim of his life. Never did he invent any new dogmas. Never did he pretend to preach a new religion. He only wanted that the people in whose veins runs the blood of Rishis—the mighty seers of ancient times—should once again follow that religion which has for its basis the Vedas. He himself has ably summarised all his beliefs and teachings in his well-known work the *Sathyarthi-Prakash*. Let it be remembered, however, that he never forced his beliefs upon others. He earnestly desired on the other hand, that people should study them in the light of reason and accept them only when they stand the severe test of reason and common sense which should not, however, be in the least influenced by peevish prejudice or blind bigotry.”

**Death of Dayanand.** In the year 1883, Swami Dyanand Saraswati was in the Native States of Rajputana. In the month of March of that year, he in response to an invitation sent by the Chief of Shahapur went there and delivered some lectures on Religion and Morality. In May, Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh of Jodhpur invited him to visit his city, which he did and remained for four months. In October, he suddenly fell ill and was removed to Ajmere for a change, where inspite of the best medical aid, his condition grew worse day by day, and at last on the 30th October, 1883, he passed away peacefully reciting the *Gayatri Mantra*. By the death of Swami Dayanand Saraswati the country has lost a most distinguished Vedic scholar and a staunch religious reformer. Some

time, before his death, he executed a will, by which he made over all his property to a committee consisting of Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade (Bombay), Diwan Bahadur Raghunath Rao (Madras) and others, called the *Paropkarini Sabha*, for the purpose of accomplishing the following aims :—

1. The publication of the Vedas and Vedangas.
2. The preaching of the Vedas through learned preachers.
3. The maintenance and education of the poor and orphans of India.



## NAWAB SIR KHAWJA ABDUL GUNNY.

**"It was on the accession of Nawab Abdul Gunny to the management that the prosperity of the house reached its zenith. With no previous experience of landed property, he quickly, with characteristic energy, mastered all the details and proved an ideal Zemindar. He possessed also great influence over his co-religionists. His acts of public and private charity were very numerous and magnificent."**

**—C. E. Buckland.**

**Family History.** Nawab Sir Khawja Abdul Gunny Bahadur K. C. S. I., was one of the illustrious Zemindars of Bengal occupying a very high and exalted position for nearly the latter half of the nineteenth century by his various works of public utility and munificence. The presence of such a magnanimous benefactor in Eastern Bengal where his name was a household word shed a lustre over the Province of Bengal and particularly its old capital, Dacca. The early history of the family can be traced from the middle of the eighteenth century, when Muhammad Shah was Emperor of Delhi. The family trace their descent from Kashmere ; the original founder, Khawja Abdul Hakim removed to Delhi for seeking his fortune at the Imperial Court. But he being unable to obtain any favour therefrom, removed to Sylhet and established himself in commerce. It is said that by dint of intelligence and sharp common sense he soon thrived in business. After his death, his son, Moulvi Abdullah removed to Dacca, where he settled in Begum Bazar and established a trading firm. The tomb of Abdul Hakim can be seen in Sylhet to this day. Once they had fairly established themselves in trade, they began to purchase landed property, which was much cheaper in those days. The family was not well-known outside the local limits until Khawja Alimulla became the head of the house. He was

National Biography for India.



**Nawab Sir Khwaja Abdul Gunny Bahadur, K.C.S.I.**

*Born—1813*

*Died—1896.*



known to be a man of strong common sense and a most successful man of his day. He rose at a time when Mahomedan rule at Dacca declined owing to various causes ; and this downfall and embarrassment helped him not a little to own for himself much more properties than what he could have acquired under ordinary circumstances. Thus, at the time of his death, he left extensive estates lying in the districts of Dacca, Mymensingh, Backerganj, Faridpur, Chittagong, and Tippera. His business ability can be realised from the fact that he purchased Dar-i-ya-i-Nur, the famous diamond, for only Rs. 60,000, which is now worth several lakhs of rupees.

**An Ideal Zemindar.** Khawja Abdul Gunny was the son of Khawja Alimulla and was born in the year 1813 (22nd. Sraban, 1220 B. S.). Abdul Gunny's father carefully watched over the proper training of his son and it is said that before he had inherited the estates from his father, he acquired a fair knowledge of Persian and other languages. On the death of his father in 1848, he succeeded to the estates when he was thirty-five. If he had not the gift of skilfully managing the Zemindary affairs, the big estates of the young owner would have been ruined like that of many another of this day. His fame as an ideal Zemindar soon spread like wild fire all over Bengal, and he became in no time the foremost nobleman in Eastern Bengal. It was during his time that the prosperity of the house reached its utmost capacity and the name and fame of the Nawab of Dacca soon spread all over the land. The other most important work of his life was that of his settlement of numerous public and private disputes in a most satisfactory manner; otherwise ruin would have been inevitable to many. In 1869, he brought by his judicious advice a serious disturbance between the Shias and Sunnis at Dacca (he himself was a Sunni) to a successful termination. It was owing to his winning manners and these happy features

of his character that he was soon able to capture the hearts not only of those who were in touch with him but of the public in general at Dacca.

**Services at the time of the Sepoy Mutiny.** Nine years after his accession to the estates an opportunity arose of proving his loyalty and attachment to the British throne, which marked the house ere long as loyal and faithful to Government. At the outbreak of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857 the condition at Dacca was not very safe. Some 1,050 Native Infantry of the 73rd Regiment were stationed at Dacca, who gradually became disaffected. When the condition became gradually serious and threats of plunder and violence were held out to him, he uttered : "If you are powerful, I am not afraid of you, for I place my reliance in Him who is stronger and more powerful than the whole universe put together, and He, I am sure, will not forsake or abandon me at this crisis." Next when his friends advised him to leave the station to save his life, he remained firm and undaunted and replied : "My presence in the station at this critical moment inspires my countrymen with hope and confidence in the British Government, and prevents the evil-doers from carrying out their wicked designs. My absence, on the other hand, will cause a general panic and precipitate matters which we are so anxious to prevent." Abdul Gunny actively associated himself with the officials of the station and helped them by placing his boats, elephants, horses and carriages at their disposal. He fortified his house and armed his retainers. His heroic courage and example helped much in allaying the panic ; and many were kept loyal at his instance. With a view to show his confidence to the British throne, he helped the Government by giving a large loan for meeting the expenditure of the Mutiny. The faithful services of Abdul Gunny at the crisis of the Sepoy Mutiny have all along been

acknowledged by Government and they have amply rewarded him for his services. He did not only helped the Government by money and other things, but he gave much valuable information to the authorities as to the actual situation of the country.

**Bestowal of Honours.** It is usual that honours and decorations should fall thick upon a man of Abdul Gunny's stamp. At his early age, he was at first made an Honorary Magistrate at Dacca. In 1866, he was appointed a member of the Bengal Legislative Council at the time of Sir Cecil Beadon, the third Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. In the following year, he was nominated an additional member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. He was made a Companion of the Order of the Star of India in 1871. In 1875, the title of Nawab as a personal distinction was bestowed on him, which was made hereditary in 1877, on the occasion of the Proclamation of the Queen Victoria as Empress of India in a Darabar at Delhi. In 1886, Nawab Abdul Gunny was made a Knight Commander of the most Exalted Order of the Star of India; and he was made a Nawab Bahadur in 1892. In 1874, he was specially introduced by Lord Northbrook to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in Calcutta who awarded him a medal, which was due to his brilliant services in connection with the Mutiny.

**His Works of Magnificence.** Nawab Sir Abdul Gunny was remarkably known for his numerous acts of charity and magnificent works of public utility. It has been ascertained on calculation, that the total sum of his subscriptions and donations amounted to several lakhs of rupees, directing them mainly in aid of the sick and the poor, hospitals and dispensaries, schools and colleges, clubs and societies. Irrespective of nationality, creed, or place, his purse was ever open to relieve suffering humanity. We mention here some of the prominent objects of his charitable acts: He gave two lakhs

of rupees for the supply of filtered water in the town of Dacca, free of water-rate,—the foundation stone of the water works being laid out by the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, on August 6, 1871. He contributed Rs. 40,000 for the repairs of the Zobcida Canal in Mecca ; Rs. 20,000 for the relief of the sufferers in the famines of 1867 and 1874 ; Rs. 10,000 to alleviate the distress in the flood of 1885 ; Rs. 10,000 for relieving the distresses caused by the cyclones of 1864 and 1867 ; Rs. 5,000 for the relief of sick and wounded soldiers in the Franco-German war ; Rs. 5,500 for the purchase of land for the Dacca Madrassa building ; Rs. 35,000 for the Buckland bund with ghats on the river side at Dacca ; Rs. 20,000 for the sick and wounded soldiers in the Russo-Turkish war of 1887 ; Rs. 15,000 for the relief of the sufferers from earthquake and for repairs of Dargahs in Cashmere ; Rs. 12,000 to commemorate the visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh ; Rs. 11,300 for the Alipur Zoological gardens ; Rs. 10,000 for the benefit of the Attia tenants ; Rs. 10,000 for a mosque and a ghat at Ramchandrapur ; Rs. 5,000 for lighting the town of Comilla ; Rs. 25,245 for the female ward in the Mitford Hospital, Dacca ; Rs. 9,000 for expenses of sending 10 pilgrims to Mecca ; Rs. 5,000 for Prince Albert Victor Reception Committee ; Rs. 10,000 for Tornado Relief Fund ; Rs. 10,000 for constructing two roads leading to the mosque of Shah Ali Saheb ; Rs. 5,000 to the Jubilee Memorial Fund. Besides his various contributions and donations, he established a free High English School at Dacca for the benefit of the poor and helpless students.

**The End of his Great Career.** Nawab Sir Abdul Gunny was a man of great physical powers ; he was a skilful rider and sportsman, and much devoted to music. He possessed a strong will, and whatever he thought to carry out, he would carry out. Nawab Sir Abdul Gunny possessed a great mind—

a mind that could touch all. Like a big and shady tree that gives shelter to thousands of birds and other animals the deceased nobleman was a resting place to all alike without any distinction of race, creed or colour. The Zemindars of Eastern Bengal always received help from him. The Nawab handed over the practical management of the family estates to his eldest son, Khawja Ahsanulla in 1868. In that year, he retired from the management of his estates, and appointed his said son as his successor, who thus became the *Mutawali* of the entire property. The Nawab Sir Abdul Gunny died at Dacca on the 24th, August, 1896, at the ripe age of 83. Thus one of the great Mahomedan noblemen of Bengal passed away to the other world. He was the wealthiest landlord in Eastern Bengal, and sincerely loved and respected by all. In him, the country lost a truly good man and a wise benefactor, and the Government a devoted friend. Sir Richard Temple, Bart., in his "Men and events of my time in India" (1882) remarked: "In Eastern Bengal the most influential Muhammadan was Nawab Abd-ul-Ghani, of Dacca. The fortune of his family had been made chiefly by trade, and he had great landed possessions. He also was a man of the old school, munificent in disposition and loyal in conduct. His son seemed to have inherited the paternal qualities, but was somewhat more a man of the new school."

After the death of Nawab Sir Abdul Gunny Bahadur, his eldest son Nawab Sir Khwaja Ahsanulla Bahadur became the head of the Nawab family of Dacca.



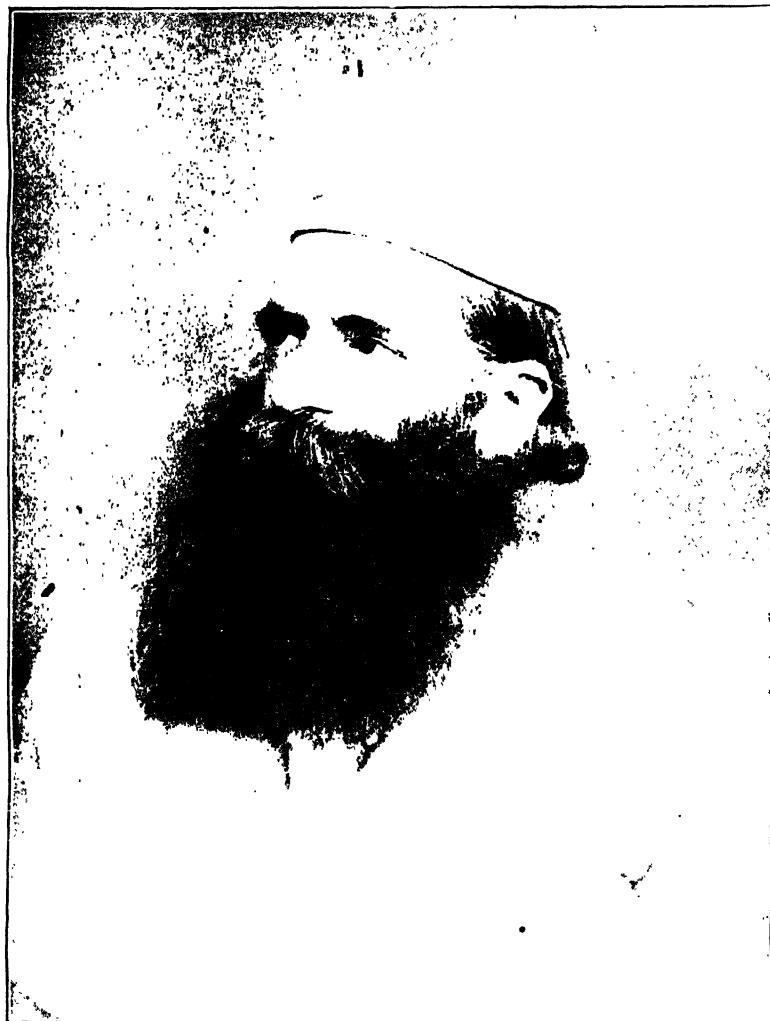
## PANDIT AJUDHIA NATH.

"Standing on this platform and speaking in this city, one feels almost an overpowering sense of despair when one finds that the familiar figure and the beloved face of Pandit Ajudhianath is no more. We mourned for him when he died, we have mourned for him since ; and those of us who had the privilege of knowing him intimately, of perceiving his kindly heart, his great energy, his great devotion to the Congress cause, and the sacrifices he made for that cause, will mourn for him to the last."

—W. C. Bonnerjee.

**Early Career.** Pandit Ajudhia Nath, the distinguished lawyer and earnest patriot that the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh produced in the nineteenth century was born in a well-to-do family of Kashmir Brahmins at the famous town of Agra on April 8, 1840—the city which has great historical significance by the existance of one of the seven wonders of the world erected at the time of the remarkable Moghul Emperor, Shahjehan, on the tomb of his beloved Begum named Memtaj Mehal on the bank of the most sublime and picturesque river, Jumna. His father, Pandit Kedar Nath, was called a merchant prince at Agra, who also served for some time as Dewan to the Nawab of Jaffhar. From his very boyhood, Ajudhia Nath showed his liking for such oriental languages as Arabic and Persian. He was admitted to the Agra College at thirteen and was remarkable as a brilliant student. In the Annual Report of the Education Department of the Province for the year 1860-61, Ajudhia Nath was referred to as "intelligent and promising student," and his answers to questions on such subjects as Philosophy and History were remarked to be of "uncommon acuteness and thought." Ajudhia Nath left college in 1862. His father had intended him for a mercantile

**National Biography for India.**



**Pandit Ajudhia Nath.**

*Born—c. 1600.*

*Died—1802.*



career; but the prospect had no attractions for him and as his inclinations were averse to it, he was allowed to pursue his own bent. He was in favour of taking up the legal profession, which made him acquire the zenith of his fame.

**His Works of Public Usefulness.** After having qualified for the profession of law, he joined the Bar at Agra. At Agra, he served as Professor of Law in 1869, and with the co-operation of some of the leading men of the place, he succeeded in establishing the Victoria College—now only a High School, in which he took an active interest. When after the Mutiny, the seat of the N. W. P. Government was removed from Agra to Allahabad, and the High Court was shifted there, he also removed his professional seat to the latter city. His father's death occurred about this time, and Ajudhia Nath was left sole heir to a large fortune and a flourishing business. As a lawyer, he was highly successful, and earned a considerable fortune. Even in the busy days of his profession, he did not give up his regular study of English, Persian and Arabic. In 1881, when the proposal to appoint an Indian Judge to the Allahabad High Court was sanctioned, Pandit Ajudhia Nath was strongly recommended for the office by Sir Robert Stuart, the then Chief Justice of the N. W. Provinces; but other interests prevailed with the Government of India, and the preference was given to Mr. Justice Mahmud, son of the well-known Sir Syed Ahmed, K. C. S. I. His first public work at Allahabad was the starting of a daily newspaper in English, in 1879, in the name of *Indian Herald*, of which he was the guide. But as it did not flourish long and as he lost over Rs. 94,000 for the paper, he, in 1890 patronised another newspaper in the name of *Indian Union*, which was as that time a leading organ of the country. When the local government was accorded the privilege of having a Legislative Council of its own, Sir Alfred Lyall, selected him as its first Indian

From the records of the Congress it can be seen that he first spoke in 1888 on the procedure of discussing subjects in the Congress sessions. In the following session at Bombay, the Pandit was entrusted with resolutions on the reformation of Legislative Councils and the Arms Act of 1878. In the Congress of 1890 in Calcutta, he proposed one resolution, and in the next Congress at Nagpur he spoke on the salt and income taxes. It was at his request, when the Congress of 1888 met at Allahabad, and when he received great opposition for holding it there, he boldly declared that, "If my countrymen in the N.W.P. are found to be lukewarm, which they are not, I would pay Rs. 50,000 from my own pocket, and hold the Congress at my own expense." In fact, the success of the Allahabad session in 1888, was entirely due to the unceasing energy of the Pandit. He as Chairman of the Reception Committee delivered a most enthusiastic speech, from which extracts are given below :--

1.

"Now, gentlemen, I ask you, is it not absurd to suppose that the educated natives of India, who have such an admiration for the free and representative institutions of England, could ever wish to be under Russian rule, or become Russian serfs? History we have read, English education we have received, with Englishmen we have mixed and mixed freely, but we are not credited, it would seem, with even sense enough to realize that the English Government is far better than the Russian or than that of any other European Power. The existence of the Congress, the very meetings which we hold annually, are the best proofs of the excellence of the British Government. Where will you find any Government which would allow a foreign country, which it has pleased Providence to place under its charge, to have the same constitutional freedom of speech as the British Government has been pleased to grant to us ?

If occasion arises, we will prove to our opponents that it is we who are loyal, and not they ; it is we who will support the Government and not they ; it is we who will be ready with our purses, and not they. We fully acknowledge the inestimable blessings conferred upon us by Government. We most gratefully admit the numberless benefits derived by India from the British rule, and all that we now say is this, *viz.*, that there is yet room for improvement ; that England can confer still further blessings upon us ; and that, therefore, we may properly approach our Most Gracious Empress--approach her most respectfully and loyally--with the prayer that she will cause all those gracious pledges given on her behalf to be now more fully redeemed. England has been the first to introduce free institutions into this country, and we ask Her Majesty now to extend them so far as the circumstances will permit, so that to the end of time the English Government may be held up to all the civilized governments under the sun, as the very model of perfection. That our prayers will be granted sooner or later I have not the slightest doubt."

On the departure of Mr. A. O. Hume to England, Pandit Ajudhia Nath was appointed Joint General Secretary to the Indian National Congress, holding the office from 1889, till his death. He was also one of the Trustees of the Congress Permanent Fund. It is said that there was not a stouter champion of the Congress cause than him, and if he had not been snatched away so suddenly from this world, he would have surely filled the honourable place as President of the Congress in an earlier session. Since he was converted to this National cause, there had been no more sturdier champion than him and he had implicit faith in its creed which was to derive boons from the rulers by means of constitutional agitation. His ability, industry and perseverance raised him to the front rank of the public men of his time and there were very few leaders of men who were more independent

and more fearless than what was Pandit Ajudhia Nath, the champion of public affairs in the North Western Provinces and a distinguished patriot of India generally.

**The End of his Career.** The Congress of 1891 was held at Nagpur in which he attended and worked assiduously for the success of the session, but alas ! that was his last work for the Congress. His eloquent speeches and his marvellous energies and resources were never heard again. He contracted a severe cold on his return journey, pneumonia suddenly developed, to which he succumbed, without a warning, on Sunday the 10th January, 1892, at a premature age of 52, leaving the members of his family and sorrowing countrymen to mourn his loss. The country became poorer by the early passing away of a man who was possessed of all the essential qualities of the good and great. The Court and the offices at Allahabad were closed for a day on account of the lamented death of Pandit Ajudhia Nath. In Calcutta, private colleges were closed out of respect to his memory. Memorial meetings were held in some of the important cities of the country, and numerous letters and telegrams of condolence were received by the bereaved family. How highly the Pandit was esteemed by the Europeans, may be realised from the fact that Mr. Justice Knox of the Allahabad High Court, sent a floral wreath to decorate the bier. The following commemorative utterances of the then Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court show in what high respect the Pandit was held, not only by the members of the profession but even by the Judges themselves :—

“We feel that we ought not to allow this opportunity of our being assembled in Full Bench to pass without expressing our sorrow for the death and paying our tribute of respect to the memory of one who, for many years, has held a high position in this Court and in these Pro-

vinces as an advocate, one who was possessed of the highest legal and forensic attainments. On Monday last we received the sad news that Pandit Ajodhya Nath had been removed by death from amongst us, and we of the Bench felt that we had lost in him not only a personal friend, but one of the best lawyers and ablest advocates of the Court. We felt that the members of the Bar and the vakils practising in this Court had lost in him also a friend, and that the profession at large of these Provinces had suffered a still greater loss in losing in him a bright and living example of what an honourable advocate should be. Pandit Ajodhya Nath was a thoroughly well-read lawyer, who thoroughly understood his work and never missed or overlooked a point which could tell in favour of his client. He was skilled in applying the law to the facts, and had that sound and rare judgment which enables a great advocate, as we think he was, to discriminate between the important and the unimportant facts and incidents in a case, and put his client's case in the most favourable light before a Court. No matter how complicated might be the facts of the case in which he was engaged or how intricate or difficult the questions of law upon which he had to address us, or how necessarily prolonged might be his argument, he was never wearisome. It was always a pleasure to us to listen to him, and we frequently derived instruction from the legal arguments of Pandit Ajodhya Nath. I confess that I have not unfrequently been captivated by the display, on sudden and difficult emergencies in his cases of his knowledge of law, the subtlety of his mind and his persuasive powers. In his arguments before us he was most scrupulous in avoiding even the semblance of a misstatement of facts, and thereby secured in our Judges a thorough reliance upon his honour as an advocate. I need scarcely say that he was thoroughly independent. His character and career as a lawyer afford a good example to the younger members of the profession of how an honourable advocate may attain in that profession to the

front rank and gain, what is no small assistance to the success of an advocate, the confidence, respect and friendship of the tribunal before which he practises."

In referring to his death, the Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University, remarked : "He took a very keen interest in education, was a constant attendant at our meetings, and brought to bear upon our work intellectual powers which only few possess. He was a man of whom any country and any race might well be proud. His character was of the highest, his ability was undoubted, and his acquirements were of the most varied description." The *Hindoo Patriot* wrote : "The Hon'ble Pandit Ajodhyanath of Allahabad is dead. The news will be hardly credited by those who but a short fortnight ago listened to his eloquent speeches at Nagpur and was struck by his marvellous energies and resources. As Joint General Secretary of several successive Congresses he was one of their moving spirits and their success was to a great extent due to his single-hearted and unwavering devotion to the cause and the country. Pandit Ajodhyanath was not in good health latterly and his labours in connection with the Congress and his professional duties had undermined his health. He was a remarkable man in many respects. \*\* The *Statesman* says it was shocked to receive the telegram announcing the Pandit's sudden and unexpected death and so is the whole country. It is a severe blow to the Congress cause and what adds to the bitterness of our sorrow is that he should have been literally a victim of the cause. He died in harness and the dust of Nagpur was not yet off his feet when he was laid low. \*\* A truer spirited worker there was not in the Congress ranks, and the loss to the Congress is irreparable. The present esteemed leader of the United Provinces, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, whose name is a household word in this country for his patriotism and devotion,

expressed himself as follows, when presiding over the second session of the Provincial Conference at Lucknow in 1908 :—

“It was my proud privilege to work under Pandit Bishambhar Nath, as it had been to work under Pandit Ajodhya Nath, up to the last days of his life. It is not for me to dwell here on the inspiring enthusiasm of Pandit Ajodhya Nath, or of the sober but unflagging devotion of Pandit Bishambhar Nath to the country’s cause. But I may be permitted to say that though great has been our sorrow at the loss of these honoured leaders, when I think of the nobleness of their patriotism, the deep earnestness of their interest in the country’s cause, their readiness to undergo any sacrifice which might be necessary to promote public good, I feel hopeful, believing as I do in the doctrine of rebirths, that these great and good souls, and other great sons of India, will be born again and again in our midst until they have seen their dear country take its proper place of honour in the scale of nations. Considering how much noble work is to be done to lift the vast mass of our countrymen from a state of ignorance, poverty and misery to a state of happiness befitting civilised men, the patriot, like a true philanthropist, might, well postpone the beatitude of salvation to the glorious service of God through man.”

His sons, Pandit Raj Nath Kunzru is a Zemindar and Banker at Agra, and Pandit Hridaya Nath Kunzru is a member of the Servants of India Society established by the Hon’ble Mr. G. K. Gokhale, C. I. E. A worthy son of an illustrious father, he has pledged himself to the service of the country for the whole of his life.



## HARISH CHANDRA MOOKERJEA.

**"He was a man of latent genius. As the editor of the *Hindoo Patriot* he rendered invaluable services to the cause of native amelioration and advancement. The good government of his country was always uppermost in his thoughts, and he made the promotion of it his life work."**

—**Ram Gopal Ghose.**

**Early Life.** The name of Harish Chandra Mookerjea stands pre-eminent on the roll of Indian patriots and journalists for his unfailing devotion to his country, earnest sympathy for the poor and brilliant journalistic career. Harish Chandra was born in the hot month of April, 1824, at Bhowanipur, a suburb in Calcutta in the house of his maternal uncle, Bireswar Chatterjea. His father, Ramdhan Mookerjea, though a high caste Kulin Brahmin was yet a man of straitened circumstances having three wives, and the subject of our sketch was the youngest son by his last wife, Rukkini Devya. Once Harish Chandra thus said of his origin: "A Hindu among the nations, a Brahmin among the Hindus, a Kulin among the Brahmins, and a Foola among the Kulins." As was generally the case with the Kulin Brahmins, Harish Chandra was brought up in the house of his maternal uncle. At the tender age of five, he was sent to a *Pathsala* where he received elementary training in his mother tongue. Harish Chandra learned the English alphabet when he was seven years old, and afterwards he was sent to the Union School at Bhowanipur where he was taken in as a free student. He studied at the Institution for about seven years, and he left school when a boy of fourteen only for making provision for his helpless family and himself. The

bitterness of his poverty at that time may be ascertained from the following description, which appeared in an issue of the *Mukerjea's Magazine* of 1862, edited by Babu Sambhu Chandra Mukerjea, a journalist of repute :—

“On one unfortunate day, when he had not a grain of rice in his house for a simple dinner, and the call of nature could not be attended to, he thought, poor soul, of mortgaging a brass plate to buy his simple fare. It was raining hard and furious, and there was no umbrella to go out under. Pensive and sad did the fainished youth sit in the house, meditating upon his unfortunate lot—not, however, without a full reliance on the Providence of Him who oversees the needy wants of all, providing with an unsparing hand for the poor and the destitute. He looked down upon Harish, sitting alone and grievous, and rescued the unfortunate victim of cruel fate from sheer starvation, by sending to him, just in the very nick of time, the *Mookhtyar* of a rich *Zemindar* with a document for translation. The fee was but two rupees—but it was a God-send : like the manna in the wilderness to the wandering Israelities, it proved to be the providential supplying of his pressing wants ; and Harish, receiving it, offered up his thanks to Him who had so mysteriously saved his life.”

**In Government Service.** After undergoing considerable troubles and difficulties, Harish Chandra was able to secure an employment as a bill writer in the firm of Messrs. Tullah and Company, auctioneers in Calcutta, on a scanty pay of rupees ten only per mensem, when he was barely fourteen. After serving there for some time he prayed for an increase of his pay, but it being refused, he left the firm in disgust. In 1848, after passing a competitive test he was appointed a clerk on Rs. 25 a month in the office of the Military Auditor-General in Calcutta. This appointment was the turn-

ing point of his life, and before he completed thirteen years of service, he rose to be the Assistant Military Auditor on a monthly salary of Rs. 400,—the appointment which he held till the lamentable close of his life. In the office, he received constant help and encouragement from such of his superiors, as Colonels Champneys and Goldie who soon “discovered his latent powers, intelligence, and extraordinary business capacity, and never failed to encourage him with friendly advice, reward, and hope.” These noble-hearted English officials supplied him with newspapers, magazines and books from their own library and encouraged him, as far as possible, to acquire a knowledge of history, politics and law. Harish Chandra with admirable perseverance and self-sacrifice rose to be a leading man of his time in Bengal. In his official capacity, he was regarded for his independence, manliness, and exceptional capacity for doing work. Harish Chandra made stupendous improvement of his knowledge by means of self-culture. Since he accepted appointment in the firm of Messrs. Tullah and Company, he used to study regularly by purchasing books and also by attending the Calcutta Public Library. The fact that he could read fast will be apparent from a reliable statement that he read seventy-five volumes of *Edinburgh Review*, some three or four times over in the course of five months. He possessed too a wonderful memory.

**His Career as a Journalist.** Harish Chandra as he advanced in knowledge, was tending towards journalism. His first contribution had appeared in the columns of *Hindoo Intelligencer*, then conducted by Babu Kasi Prasad Ghose, a reputed journalist. Babu Kristo Das Pal said : “He practised public writing in the columns of the *Englishman*, which was then edited by Mr. Cobb: Hurry, who in those days was a great friend of the natives.” The *Hindoo Patriot* had been first established as a weekly organ in the beginning of 1853, by Babu Grish

Chandra Ghose and his brothers. Harish Chandra was associated with it from the first day of its starting. After four months, the entire task of editing the *Hindoo Patriot* fell on him. The annual subscription of the paper was only Rs. 10. For the first two years, he had to conduct it with considerable sacrifice of time and money, as he scarcely had a hundred subscribers only. In 1856, when the widow-marriage question occupied prominent public attention, he lent his powerful pen to the advocacy of the reform. Harish Chandra nobly defended the policy of 'Clemency' Canning during the horrible crisis of Sepoy Mutiny in 1857-58. When improvements had to be made to his Press by purchasing new types, he was obliged to receive the pecuniary aid offered by the patriotic Zemindars of Paikpara, Rajas Protap Chandra Singh and Iswar Chandra Singh. A learned article on "Hindoo and European Civilisation—a contrast" appeared in the *Hindoo Patriot* early in 1854, showing his erudition and knowledge of philosophy. Harish Chandra wrote several important articles at the time of the great Indian Mutiny. In the *Hindoo Patriot* of December 31, 1858, an excellent article appeared from his pen, pointing out the evil effects of the Mutiny, from which a passage is extracted below :—

"The year 1857 will form the date of an era unsurpassed in importance by any in the history of mankind. For us who are living in the midst of those scenes which have stamped this epochal character on the year, it is impossible to realize in its fullest measure the interest that will attach to it in the eyes of posterity. Our minds are too full of the incidents of the rebellion—of this siege and that massacre, the battle, the retreat, the ambuscade, mutinies, treacheries and treasons—they are far too agitated,—to receive a fair image of the present. The rebellion came upon us with a shock for which no class of the community was prepared. It has taken by surprise

the country—not excepting the vast body of the rebels themselves. For eight long months it has ravaged the land in its length and breadth, spreading crime and misery of every hue and form. And when now its strength has been broken and its end has made itself visible, it bids fair to leave the nation a legacy of prolonged and yet unknown troubles."

It is said, "Harish Chandra acted the part of a saviour of his country by rightly interpreting the viws of the Natives towards the Government and *vice versa*. He not only faithfully represented the native feeling on this subject, but disproved, with a masterly pen, the fallacious nature of the serious allegations made against the loyalty of the Natives and Princes of India. Week after week, he wrote in the *Hindoo Patriot* masterly and clever articles on the Mutiny, with the sole object of removing misapprehensions from the mind of the Government, and sometimes with a bitter, sarcastic spirit, and at other times with sober, sound judgment & array of arguments, he convinced the Government of the arrant nonsense and malevolence that invariably disfigured the columns of the hostile press. The consequence was that the Government saw the state of affairs in its true light."

**A Great Patriot.** Early in the Nineteenth Century the English Planters settled in large numbers in Lower Bengal, who took up the plantation of indigo. In 1860, some twenty lakhs of the cultivators belonging to the districts of 24-Parganas, Nuddea, Jessore, Rajshahi and Pabna combined and resolved not to cultivate indigo in future even at the sacrifice of their lives. At the time of this crisis, Harish Chandra rendered great service to the poor cultivators by espousing their cause in the columns of the *Hindoo Patriot*. He so strongly advocated the cause that it led the Government to appoint a commission of enquiry as to the grievances of the cultivating

class of Bengal, consisting of Mr. W. S. Seaton-Karr, C.S. (President) ; Mr. (afterwards Sir) Richard Temple representing the Government ; Mr. W. F. Fergusson representing the planting community ; Rev. J. Sale representing the missionaries ; and Babu Chandra Mohan Chatterjea representing the British Indian Association. Harish Chandra gave important evidence before the Commission in July of that year. On being asked whether he is the Editor of the *Hindoo Patriot*, he answered :—"I do not hold myself the responsible editor of the paper, but I have sufficient influence with the proprietor to make him adopt any tone of policy I deem fit." Harish Chandra had not only drafted memorials and petitions for the ryots at the time of the crisis, but supported them with food and lodging. The indigo planters instituted law suits against him, and after his sudden death they were able to succeed in winning the cases, which resulted in the attachment of his house, sold under the decree of the Subordinate Judge, Alipur.

Harish Chandra was an active and influential member of the British Indian Association, since 1852. He drafted the famous petition sent from India in 1853 against the renewal of the charter of the East India Company. With a view to carry on ably the discussions as a member of the British Indian Association, Harish Chandra acquainted himself thoroughly with all the Regulation laws. Harish Chandra was not only the first Indian journalist of great distinction, but he was also the first man to address a petition to the Secretary of State for India urging the necessity of holding the Indian Civil Service Examination simultaneously both in England and India, the subject as stands at present, is a problem of great significance. Harish Chandra will ever occupy a very, high place among the true lovers of their mother-country for the disinterested services he rendered as editor of the *Hindoo*.

*Patriot* for full eight years. He worked manfully and straightforwardly on such troublous times as the great Indian Mutiny, Indigo disturbance in Bengal, and in dealing with such questions of importance as widow marriage and Lord Dalhousie's annexation policy. He was a politician of a very high order,—the fact may be ascertained from his writings in his famous newspaper. Moreover, self-sacrifice and self-denial were the guiding motto of his life. All throughout his short yet marvellous career, Harish Chandra made tremendous sacrifices for his paper, the poor and distressed people and also for the indigo cultivators. Early in life, he married Mukshoda Devya, daughter of Govinda Chandra Chatterjea of Utterpara, and he was blessed with a son when Harish was a boy of sixteen only, but after three years both his son and wife died, and he married for the second time. Harish was a Brahmo in his religion and his lectures at the Brahmo Mandir of Bhowanipur, subsequently published in a book, bear ample testimony to his philosophic mind and religious fervour.

**His Premature End.** It was a great misfortune to this country that a sturdier worker like him was taken away from this world on June 16, 1860 at such an early age of 36. He lived and died a poor man. On July 21, a public meeting was held at the Hall of the British Indian Association in memory of the departed great. Babu Ram Gopal Ghose, a famous patriot of Bengal, moved the first resolution which runs thus: "That this meeting desires to record its deep sense of the grievous loss which the native community has suffered by the untimely and lamented death of the late Babu Harish Chandra Mookerjea, who devoted, with untiring energy, his rare abilities in promoting the best interests of his countrymen." Ram Gopal in the course of a lengthy speech paid a glowing tribute to his life and work, from which extracts are noted below:—

He had the honour of the acquaintance of Harish Chandra Mukherjea for the last ten years. The first time he met him, it struck him that he was a man of latent genius which was just developing itself. And his genius did develop itself most remarkably. His connection with the British Indian Association did it an immense deal of good. The resignation of Babu Prosanna Kumar Tagore left a gap which was ably filled by Harish Chandra. He (the speaker) had been a good deal accustomed to committee work, and had noticed that members of a committee were usually divided into two sections, one of which did the work and the other merely concurred, and Harish belonged to the former. He never complained of work, candle light, or no candle light. Even after office hours, he laboured arduously and became a great prop of the British Indian Association, the only native political body on this side of India. Thus he became entitled to the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen, but it was not only in that capacity : in many others he was so entitled. As the editor of the *Hindoo Patriot* he rendered invaluable services to the cause of native amelioration and native advancement. When that paper was first started, a great question came under discussion, namely, the Charter Act. In the elucidation of that measure he took an active and prominent part. Subsequently when the Mutiny broke out, the *Patriot* proved at once a source of strength both to the country and to the State. They were all aware, and they could not shut their eyes to the fact, that enormous evil had created a great antagonistic feeling between the two nations. He would say as little as possible on that irritating subject, but he could not help saying, that here their friend stemmed the tide with a bold front, and at the same time endeavoured in every possible way to promote allegiance to the Crown throughout the land. He admired the singleness of the purpose to which he was devoted -- a singleness which he believed was deep-seated and unwavering. It was not only on these grounds that

he urged them to pay a tribute to his memory, but he would put it on still higher grounds. Harish was not simply a minute writer or a committee man or a public writer. He gave the entire energy, the little time he could spare, not only in writing for his own paper but in assisting others. Whenever a man was in distress and wanted help, he had only to go to Bhowanipore; there Harish was ready to assist him, no matter how humble an individual he was. If he could but impress Harish with the idea that his case was a just one, he was sure to receive support. All his time was taken up in writing petitions and calling upon his wealthy friends to advocate the cause of the poor. That was a bright trait in his character. Now that he has gone, it behoved them to do something to perpetuate his memory. \* \* On one occasion it was proposed that they should depute a special native agent to England. Harish was consulted, and they all thought he was the best person whom they could depute. He did make up his mind and he would have gone, had not, as they were all aware, social ties and social customs prevented his going so. That ponderous machinery--caste--has unfortunately been a bar to their improvement and advancement, and owing to that mischievous clog he was obliged to forego a career which would have led him on to fame and fortune. The good government of his country was always uppermost in his thoughts, and he made the promotion of it his life-work. He could not find words to describe how thoroughly devoted was Harish to make himself useful to his country. His pecuniary circumstances were not of a very cheering character. Though an unprofessional man and not a Regulation lawyer, his intelligence and his remarkable penetration would have made him a first rate pleader in the Sudder Court. He (the speaker) had once urged him to become one, and he had also urged him to follow the line of business, he himself had been engaged in for the last 30 years. In reply Harish had said that his master

had been kind to him, and that if he were to follow the business of a lawyer or merchant, he would have to devote all his time to his desk. "I have," added he, "no money to give ; only my time and my labour." The reply was characteristic ; it at once spoke the man.

Mr. W. Montrio, who was called the Father of the Calcutta Bar, followed Babu Ram Gopal in corroborating the self-sacrificing character of Harish Chandra :—

"A circumstance which occurred some years ago, when an honourable and lucrative but secondary position was offered to him in connection with the public press, and the speaker had pointed out that, having created a field and a kingdom for himself (*viz.*, the *Hindoo Patriot*) he should not forsake it to become even the prime minister of another sovereign, and that a day, afterwards Harish Chandra accosted him with the phrase—'you have conquered'—and he accordingly remained at his post. The speaker remarked, that Harish Chandra was not, as many have been, made by or for an occasion : he was equal to all occasions. Those who observed him closely, could not but acknowledge, that his superiority was intrinsic, and must have shown itself at any time and in any place. 'If you plant an oak in a garden of cucumbers, it will still grow up an oak and spread aloft its branches.'

**A Fitting Memorial.** On March 6, 1898, a public meeting was held in the Hall of the South Suburban School, Bhowanipur, under the presidency of Raja Peary Mohant Mookerjea, C. S. I., of Utterpara, in which the residents of Bhowanipur resolved to exert for naming the n. w road at Bhowanipur after him, which caused the demolition of the dwelling house of the great patriot where he was born and where he lived, and where he worked and died. It was further resolved for raising a stone obelisk with inscriptions in his memory. Thereupon a committee was formed, which collected Rs. 3,324 with which they have not

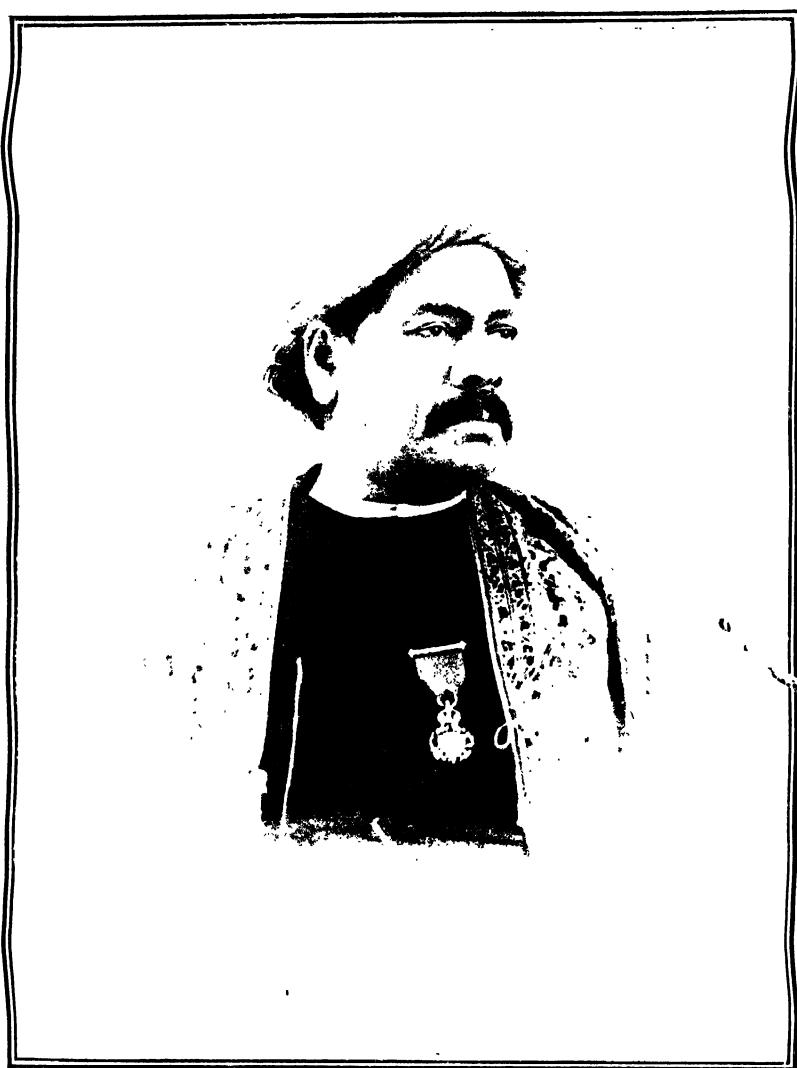
only succeeded in completing the memorial schemes, but they published and distributed freely among the subscribers of *Harish Mookerjea Memorial Fund* a book containing selections from the writings of Harish Chandra Mookerjea. The stone obelisk has been erected in the 'King Square' in Harish Mookerjea Road at Bhowanipur with the following inscriptions :—

Sacred to the memory  
of  
Hurrish Chunder Mookerjee  
Who as Editor of the Hindoo Patriot,  
As a guiding spirit of the British Indian Association,  
And in connection with various movements of his time,  
Rendered conspicuous services to the country  
By his able and disinterested discussion of public affairs ;  
Who waged war against wrong and vindicated justice  
With a rare courage, Honesty and independence ;  
Who in a critical period of transition gave counsels  
Of wisdom to the rulers and interpreted their policy ;  
Who was a father to the aggrieved poor and never  
Denied them any personal help in his power ;  
Who lived a life of  
Self-sacrifice and heroic devotion to duty ;  
Who was at once  
A tribune of the people and a pillar of the Empire ;  
This monument is erected  
By his grateful countrymen with funds raised  
By public subscriptions.





## National Biography for India.



## Rai Jai Prakash Lall Bahadur, C. I. E.

Boron-10.

Died--1807.

## JAI PRAKASH LALL.

**"By the death of Rai Jai Prakash Lall Bahadur, India loses one of her best sons. The immense popularity which he enjoyed was the result of unvarying courtesy and innate kindness of heart."**

**—The "Hindoo Patriot."**

**Early Life.** Rai Jai Prakash Lall Bahadur, C. I. E., one of the great men that the Province of Bihar has produced, was born in the year 1840, in the vicinity of Chapra, in an old and respectable Kyasth family. His forefathers had occupied a high position in the Mahomedan Courts, but the overthrow of the Mahomedan supremacy and the political changes which followed in Bihar, left the family adrift. Jai Prakash received a thorough primary education, but the straitened condition of the family did not permit him to receive his higher education, so he was obliged to seek a livelihood for himself when he was a mere boy. But the sound primary education which he received in his vernacular and also in Persian helped him amply to obtain a status in life in a short time.

**Services to the Dumraon Raj.** Talented Jai Prakash entered the service of Dumraon Raj in 1859 as the Persian teacher of the late Maharaja. The estate of Dumraon is one of the richest estates in Bihar lying in the interior of the district of Shahabad. When the late Maharaja Sir Radha Persad Singh Bahadur was a minor, Jai Prakash was first appointed as his tutor by his father, Maharaja Sir Maheshwar Baksh Singh. The performance of his duties satisfied the Maharaja and he was promoted to the office of an Accountant. Once his merit was appreciated by his master, he is sure to have rapid promotion. So in 1875, he was exalted to the

*appointment of Montazim of the domestic affairs of the Raj and Superintendent of Law and Treasury. Two years after, Mr. C. Fox, Manager of the estate, retired from service, and Jai Prakash was appointed in his place. Finally in 1881, he was made the Dewan of the Raj—the highest service in the estate. His exceptional ability combined with intelligence and industry made him to attain the highest place of responsibility difficult to occupy.*

As Dewan of the Dumraon Raj, he made improvements and introduced reforms in all departments of the estate. Before he took the reins of the office in his own hands, the affairs of Raj were in a state of disorder. The Treasury was at its lowest ebb, and the estate was under the burden of heavy debt, and the total liabilities amounting to several lakhs of rupees. But the history of the estate under the Dewanship of Jai Prakash teems with the brilliant records of progress and prosperity. In short, it may be said, that the present prosperous condition of the Dumraon estate owes its growth solely to his ability and single-minded devotion. In consequence of which the Maharaja Bahadur reposed on him an unbounded confidence and the management of his estate was solely left with his very able Dewan. In order to illustrate the fact, it can be mentioned here that the Maharaja having no son, he, in his will, appointed him one of the two executors of the estate, the other being the Maharani Sahiba herself. The industry in the transaction of the affairs entrusted to his charge stood out prominent in the annals of the career of Jai Prakash Lall.

As to the reforms he introduced in the estate of Dumraon, he paid particular attention to the development of indigenous arts and industries and allotted special funds to that head. He always took an active interest in agriculture, and the establishment of a model farm on a large scale at Dumraon in 1885, was a monument of his efforts in that

direction. The farm contains 30 acres of land and is situated about two miles north of the town. His interest in education was genuine, and the excellent schools at Dumraon owe their existence to him. He granted a liberal amount from the estate in opening a free girls' school at Dumraon in 1882. It was a notable fact that his sympathy for the advancement of education was not confined to the estate alone or even in his province but he granted donations and scholarships for the institutions in the United Provinces. Indian students proceeding to foreign countries for education received pecuniary help from the estate. The present flourishing condition of the dispensary at Dumraon is chiefly due to him. There is also a good economic museum in the estate, established in 1885, in the building known as Bhojpore Indigo Factory, containing chiefly a well-selected seeds of the principal crops grown in India with instructions as to their cultivation. It also contains agricultural tools and implements, and numerous economic products, such as fibres, dyes, spices and such others. Whenever, famine broke out in the estate, he spared no pains in relieving the poor, opening relief-works and rendering the required help. During the late Afghan war, he offered from the estate any help which the Government might require. The estate contributed largely towards the expenses incurred for receptions of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh, and Prince Albert Victor. He was the instrument in alliance of the Raj for giving the Maharaja's daughter in marriage with His Highness the present Maharaja of Rewah, a Native State in the Presidency of Pombay, which event has enriched its social position.

The value of his services in the estate of Dumraon was repeatedly acknowledged by the successive Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal and other high officials. Sir Ashley Eden expressed his warm approval of the management by Jai Prakash in these

words: "The Raj was free from debt, and the prosperity of the ryots was assured, while the Maharaja's prestige was increased, and the hands of the Government had been strengthened." The *Calcutta Gazette* in September, 1891, published the following account:—"The Commissioner specially alludes to the astonishment with which, returning to the locality after many years, he sees the immense improvements which have been made through the good sense of the Maharaja of Dumraon and the ability and enlightenment of his Dewan, Babu Jai Prakash Lall." In that year, Sir Charles Elliott, wrote of the Dewan that "he has always been treated with high consideration and confidence by my predecessors." His name was once spoken of in connection with the Dewanship of Cashmere, in succession to Lachman Dass. Had his life been prolonged, he would have been selected for a ministry in one of the very large States in India.

**His Public Services.** Jai Prakash Lall did not confine his energies to the betterment of the Dumraon estate alone, but he associated himself to the various works of public usefulness. Among his public services, he was an Honorary Magistrate of the Dumraon Bench with second class powers and powers of summary trial. The Government of Bengal, in their Annual Administration Report commended him more than once for the services he rendered as Honorary Magistrate. He was elected a Municipal Commissioner as far back as 1866, and held the office of Chairman of the Municipality. As Chairman, he rendered so much useful service that a dirty place as Dumraon was turned to a model of sanitation and conservancy. In 1884, he was appointed a member of the Bengal Legislative Council, when Sir Rivers Thompson was at the head of the province, in appreciation of his ripe experience and sagacity, where his labours were of great service in connection with various measures. He did useful work as member of the

Bihar Canals Commission and the Rent Commission. In 1887, the Government of Bengal, appointed a Committee to "enquire and examine into the working of the entire system of the Sone Canal administration, with a view to provide remedies where possible for admitted defects, and to improve the rules and, if necessary, the law under which the system is administered." The Committee was presided over by Mr. ( now Sir ) Henry Cotton and the Dewan was the only Indian member in it. The Committee commenced its enquiry on 1st December, 1887, and submitted their Report on the 13th March of the following year. Though he concurred generally with the opinion of the Committee, yet recorded a separate minute on several points.

Regarding his services to the cause of his country, he took an important part in the foundation of the Bihar Landholders' Association and acted as its Honorary Secretary for some years. He rendered valuable service to the Association at the time of the passing of the Bengal Tenancy Bill. He laid the stepping-stone of social reform among the Kyasthas of Bihar, and was the President of the first Kyasth Conference held at Lucknow. On account of the multitudinous advantages which the community received from his individual sacrifices, he received a public ovation of gratitude at the Ajmere Conference, and was honoured with the compliment of *Separ-i-Qoum* by that community. He gave munificent donations to that Conference which held at Patna and Benares. He was also complimented by the Mahomedans of Ghazipore and the Pandits of Benares, who called him *Mohsan-ul-mulk* and *Dharmarakkhak* respectively.

**Decoration with Honours.** In consideration of the "many valuable services he rendered, he was at first made a Rai Bahadur, in 1881. At a Durbar held at Dumraon in 1881,

Sir Ashley Eden, the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, when presenting him with the *khilat*, spoke thus :—

“The Maharaja has met his father’s wishes and for years past has performed the heavy responsibilities of the active management of the estates, and he has well performed those duties, assisted by the advice of his manager, Babu Jai Prakash Lal, whose able management has been specially recognised by Government in the honour conferred on him to-day. Great improvements have resulted from his administration. This splendid property has, in the course of these years of good management, been enormously benefitted. It has been entirely disencumbered of debt. So many estates, unfortunately, are borne down with the burden of debt. Not only this, but at the same time much money has been spent in works of great public utility.”

On May 25, 1892, he received the title of C. I. E., when the *Indian Mirror*, remarked : “Another deserving name to be noticed in the Gazette is that of Rai Bahadur Jai Prakash Lall, whose successful administration of Dumraon well entitles him to his new honour of a C. I. E.” At a Durbar, held at Bankipore, on July 31, 1893, Sir Antony MacDonnell, the then acting Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, presented him with the *khilat* of the distinction, and addressed him as follows :—

“Rai Jai Prakash Lall Bahadur.—It gives me great pleasure to be the medium of conveying to you the insignia of the Companionship of the most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, which has been conferred on you by Her most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress. It would take me a long time to relate the various acts by which you have established a claim on the Government for the public recognition of your services. You have been Dewan of the Maharaja Bahadur of Dumraon since 1874, and during this long period of nearly twenty years you have uniformly merited the approval of the Government in the

discharge of your onerous and important duties. I desire specially to mention the zeal and energy with which you carried out the Maharaja Bahadur's loyal and benevolent intentions in connection with the provision of comforts for the troops during the Afghan war, and also desire to acknowledge the services you rendered as a counsellor of the Lieutenant-Governor's Council eight years ago and lately as a member of the Sone Canal Committee of inquiry. You have still, I hope, a long career of public usefulness before you, and I trust that you may long enjoy the honours which you have won."

After successful termination of the cow-killing agitation in the districts of Ballia, Azamgarh and others in 1893, in connection with which, he by his presence and interference averted a ryot at Bhojapore in Bihar, and through his tact and judgment there being no other sign of ill-feeling between the Hindus and Mahomedans throughout the Raj, he was presented with a khilat comprising a valuable historical sword and a Cashmere shawl by the Maharaja himself, as a token of his appreciation and confidence, at the Annual Dussehra Darbar held at Dumraon in October, 1893.

**A Great man.** Rai Jai Prakash Lall Bahadur was a truly self-made man, and his life and work is a living example to show how a man from indigent circumstances can rise to eminence through his devotion to duty, hard work and strong common sense. His innate qualities of heart were numerous, helping him to a great extent to win the distinction. Jai Prakash was widely known for his honesty, integrity, generosity, courtesy and extreme politeness. He was ever ready to help the needy. His popularity was not confined to any particular sect or locality, but known far and wide among the different sects. He commanded the respect of the Hindus and Mussalmans alike. In his private life, he

he was simple and good-natured, hardly lost his temper,—a rare quality to find. The combination of all these qualities made him to be known among the illustrious sons of India.

***His Death and Feeling in the Country.*** *In his last days*, he was in indifferent health for some time, which caused his sudden death at Dumraon on February 7, 1897, at the age of 57 years, and his body was cremated at the famous shrine of *Charanpaduka* in the holy city of Benares, reserved specially for the Hindus of eminent position in life. The *Behar Times* in its obituary notice remarked : “The news will be received with a shock of surprise by his numerous friends both Native and European in every part of the country. To Behar the loss is that of a very prominent figure in the contemporary history of the Province, to the kyastha community that of a benefactor whose place cannot be filled up, and to the Dumraon Raj of its helmsman.” The *Behar Herald* wrote :—“Another important personage has been cut off in the prime of his life —another star of more than ordinary brilliancy has set ; and Behar is poorer by far for the loss of ‘Dewan Bahadur Jai Prakash Lal, whose last remains were carried to Benares and there cremated on the sacred banks of the river. Men like Rai Jai Prakash with their cosmopolitan sympathy go to mould destinies of their country ; and loss like this it will take years to make up.’” The *Bengalee* said : “It is with very great regret that we have to record the death of Rai Jai Prakash Lal Bahadur, C. I. E. The death of such a man is a great loss to the community, especially when we bear in mind the breadth and liberality which marked his public conduct. He did his utmost to restore amity and concord between the Hindoos and Mahomedans at the time of the cow-riots.” The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* in its issue of February 19, 1897, published a letter from its correspondent to the following effect :—

“The death of Dewan Rai Jai Prakash Lal Bahadur, C. I. E., fell like a thunder bolt from the blue sky upon the Kyastha community of Behar. He was the main pillar of the Dumraon Raj, a self-made man and an ardent well-wisher and pride of the caste to which he belonged. His death has cast a gloom over the land and created a deep gap in the Kyastha community which can never be easily filled up. Had it not been for his wonderful self-sacrifice, patriotism, and above all his masterly mind, and had it not been for his constant readiness to help the Kyastha society of which he was a prominent member, it is questionable whether the cycle of progress would have set in as early as it has done. During these days of scarcities and famine, he had laid the foundation of a colossal organisation for the supply of food to the doors of the starving millions in the Raj. His life was a real, it was an earnest life which has left behind such deeply-imbedded foot-prints on the sands of time that nothing short of a cataclysm of Nature would be destructive enough to efface them.”

**His Worthy Son.** His eldest son, Rai Harihar Prasad Singh Bahadur, is the worthy son of a worthy father. He is an energetic young man, and associates himself with all public movements of the Province of Bihar. The most notable work, that he has done, is the settlement of an agricultural colony in Burma consisting of fifteen-thousand acres of land near the Railway line in the Tungoo district, taken by his father in 1896. The land has been cultivated by the agriculturists of Bihar, chiefly of the district of Shahabad. He is an Honorary Magistrate and Municipal Commissioner at Dumraon, and has been made a Rai Bahadur in June, 1912.



## SIR K. SESHADRI AIYAR.

**"Sir Seshadri Aiyar has left a record behind him which marks him out as a member of the group of Indian statesmen whose fame has spread far beyond the borders where they laboured so faithfully and so well and whose names will remain as a lasting example to their successors. He was a man of notable qualities and strong character."**

—Lord Hardinge.

**Early Life.** Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, K. C. S. I., one of the illustrious Indian statesmen of modern times, was born in a Brahmin family on June 1, 1845, in a small village called Kumarapuram near Palghat in the district of Malabar in Southern India. He commenced his education in the old Provincial School at Calicut, where he displayed his brilliancy. He then joined the Presidency College in Madras and stood first in the Bachelor of Arts Examination in 1866. Immediately after, he entered Government service as Translator in the Collector's office at Calicut, having been entertained by Mr. Ballard. Seshadri Aiyar held various appointments under Government for about two years.

**Early Career in the Mysore State.** While in Madras, Seshadri Aiyar had made the acquaintance of Ranga Charlu, who was then employed in the Paper Currency office. In 1868, Mr. Charlu was transferred to Mysore,—then under the British administration, and appointed Mr. Aiyar as Judicial Sheristadar to the Superintendent of the Ashtagram Division, comprising the districts of Mysore and Hassan. It is no doubt that he achieved the distinction of one of the most brilliant statesmen of modern India due to his intelligence and keen forethought, but it was no less due to the patronage and early training that he received from such an able administrator

National Biography for India.



**Sir K. S. Shadri Aiyar, K. C. S. I.**

*Born—1845.*

*Die~~d~~—1901.*



as the late Ranga Charlu. Seshadri Aiyar was possessed of great energy and perseverance, which helped him much in quickly grasping even the intricate problems of the State. His willing and ungrudging labours enabled him to acquire complete mastery over all the details of administration in a short time. In 1873, he was appointed by Sir James Gordon, Judicial Commissioner, as Head Sheristadar of his Court. Then he became Assistant Commissioner in Mysore, in which capacity he served for three years. For a short time, he acted as Comptroller of the Maharaja's Household ; and in 1879, he was appointed Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate of the district of Tumkur. During the two years he remained at Tumkur, he showed various proofs of his capacity as an able executive officer and of his filling even higher and more responsible offices. He did serve successfully as the District and Sessions Judge, Ashtagram Division. In 1874, he passed the B. L. Examination of the Madras University, but did not take the degree. Seshadri Aiyar had at last to perform the most difficult work requiring great experience and knowledge. The Dewan, Ranga Charlu, could select no other competent man than him who could successfully accomplish the task. He knew well, that an intelligent and competent officer as Seshadri Aiyar, is sure to rise one day to the highest office of the State. So he deputed him to Bangalore, between the years 1881-1883, for discharging such onerous and difficult work as compiling various codes, manuals and other rules for the guidance of the officers of the State. He did this work with marked success, giving ample testimony for his prospect of gaining the highest office of the State in time. On the rendition of the State to its ruler in 1881, Ranga Charlu was elevated to the Dewanship and in the course of a short time he prepared various schemes of reforms and thereby improved the financial resources of the State. But unfor-

tunately he died in January, 1883, when the State stood in sore need of a brilliant officer at its helm.

**Services as Dewan of the Mysore State.** Seshadri Aiyar having been considered to be the fit man who to succeed the deceased Dewan, he was accordingly appointed to the exalted office of Dewan of the Mysore State on February 12, 1883, when he was only 38. We should relate here in brief the early history of Mysore. After the fall of Tippu Sultan in 1799, the British Government restored the ancient Hindu Dynasty to the throne, and administered the territory during the minority of the Hindu Prince. On his attaining majority, the territory of Mysore was restored to him. But shortly after, for reasons of misrule, he was deposed in 1832, when the British Government took up the direct administration of the State. The deposed Prince, however, in the meantime, tried his utmost to get back the State. At last, he was granted the right to adopt a son, who should succeed to the throne. This adopted son was the late distinguished Maharaja Sir Rajendra Udayar Bahadur, the noble and great father of the present ruler, during whose minority the British Government continued to administer the State, and it was in March, 1881, that he was installed to the throne. Mr. Aiyar thus describes the then condition of the State of Mysore, which will be read with interest :—

“On the 25th March, 1881, His Highness was invested with the administration of the State and he entered upon the duties of that exalted position under specially onerous conditions. During the long period of 50 years the State had been administered by the British Government ; but unfortunately it had to encounter during the closing years of that administration the most disastrous famine of which we have any record. A fifth of its population was swept away ; the accumulated surplus of nearly a crore of rupees had disappeared, and in its place there had come

into existence a debt of 80 lakhs to the British Government ; the cash balance had become reduced to a figure insufficient for the ordinary requirements of the administration ; every source of revenue was at its lowest ; and the severe retrenchments which followed had left every department of the State in an enfeebled condition.

It (the late Maharaja's reign) began with liabilities excluding the assets by  $30\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs and with an annual income less than the annual expenditure by  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs."

Thus it will be seen that he began his career as Dewan of the Mysore State at a most critical state of its affairs, and it was practically owing to his brilliant statesmanship that the improvement of its condition was effected. The marvellous success which attended his labours in the State may be realised fully from a comparison between the time of its rendition in 1881 and the year 1894, as he compared himself in the official report :—

"His Highness' reign was attended with a remarkable measure of financial success. It began with liabilities exceeding the assets by  $30\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs and with an annual income less than the annual expenditure by  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lakh. During the first three years the revenues from all sources were generally stationary, and in the fourth year there was a considerable decline, due to the drought of that year, but during the next ten years the improvement year after year was large and continuous. Comparing 1880—1881 with 1894—1895 the Annual Revenue rose from 103 to  $180\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs or by 75·24 per cent. and after spending on a large and liberal scale on all works and purposes of public utility, the net assets amounted to over 176 lakhs, in lieu of the net liability of  $30\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs with which His Highness' reign began.

Revenue.—The measure of financial prosperity above described was secured not by resort to new taxation in any form or shape. It was mainly the result of a

natural growth, under the stimulus afforded by the opening out of the country by means of new Roads and Railways, the execution of important Irrigation works, and the general expansion of industries. It was in some measure due also to improved management of particular sources of income. The Land Revenue demand rose from 69 to 96 lakhs or by 39 per cent. and the occupied area from 6,154 to 9,863 square miles, or by 60 per cent. The Excise Revenue quite quadrupled itself during the 14 years owing to the elimination of middlemen, to a system of cheaper manufacture and higher duties, to the more vigorous suppression of illicit manufacture, and to the increased consumption accompanying the growth of industries, the expansion of Public Works and Railways, and the great rise in wages. The Revenue from Forests more than doubled itself, while under Stamps and Registration the increase was 65 and 124 per cent. respectively.

**Gold Mining:**—The important industry of Gold Mining took firm root in the State during His Highness' rule. In 1886, a professional examination of the auriferous tracts in Mysore was made, and the results duly published. For the first time, in 1886-87, Royalty on gold formed an item of our State revenue, and it reached the substantial figure of Rs. 7,33,000 last year on a production of gold valued at £8,44,000. A Geological survey for the complete examination and record of the mineral resources of the country was established in 1894 and is now in full working.

**Land Tenure and Agriculture:**—The Revenue Survey and Settlement made satisfactory progress during His Highness' reign and 3 Taluks alone out of 66 now remain to be settled.

In 1881-82, His Highness abolished the *Halat* on Coffee of 4 Annas per maund and established a new Coffee tenure combining the advantages of a permanent settlement with low rates of assessment. The Coffee area increased by 28 square miles. European planters own 56,000 acres and Native Planters 1,32,000 acres.

The *Khistbandi*—or instalments for payment of Revenue—was postponed by two months so as to enable the Raiyat to dispose of his produce on advantageous terms.

The *Revenue Laws* were codified, vexatious restrictions on the enjoyment and transfer of land were swept away, and the freer relinquishment of unprofitable small parcels of land was allowed. As a means of remedying agricultural indebtedness, a scheme of Agricultural Banks on strictly co-operative principles was introduced last year.

**Forests** :—The area of Reserved Forests increased from 643 to 1,704 square miles, and 35 square miles of new plantations were formed.

**Education** :—The number of Government and aided schools rose from 866 to 1,797 and the expenditure on them from Rs. 3,15,000 to Rs. 8,19,810. The increase in the number of boys was from 39,413 to 83,398 and, in that of girls, from 3,000 to 12,000. Eight hundred Primary Vernacular Schools, fifty English Middle Schools, five Industrial Schools, two Normal Schools, thirty Sanscrit Schools, one first grade English College and three Oriental Colleges were newly established during His Highness' reign.

**Irrigation** :—One hundred lakhs were spent on original irrigation works during His Highness' reign, making an addition of 355 square miles to the area under wet cultivation, and bringing an additional Revenue of  $8\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs. With this addition the area protected by irrigation at the close of 1894-95 was 1,558 square miles. The expenditure on irrigation in 1880-81 was Rs. 3,19,000 ; in the first 4 years of His Highness' reign it averaged  $4\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs ; in the next 4 years  $8\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs ; and in the last 6 years  $13\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs.

Special encouragement was afforded to the construction of a large number of new irrigation wells, individually small, but in the aggregate a most important work of Famine protection. Rs. 4,18,500 were sanctioned as loans for these wells, of which 1,078 had been completed.

benefiting 7,000 acres of land. No additional tax is levied on the dry lands converted into garden and wet by the aid of these wells.

Communications :—In addition to the expenditure from Local Funds,  $67\frac{3}{4}$  lakhs from the State Revenue were devoted during His Highness' reign to new roads and to the maintenance and special improvement of existing ones. The mileage of roads rose from 3,930 to 5,107. The Malnad roads received particular attention, and the special expenditure upon them was Rs. 11,44,000 in the coffee tracts and Rs. 6,36,000 in the remaining Malnad.

Railways :—At the rendition the length of the State Railways open to traffic was 58 miles. The addition made to it during His Highness' reign was 315 miles at a cost of  $164\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs.

Municipal and Local Funds :—The number of Municipalities rose from 83 to 107, annual Municipal receipts from Rs. 2,76,500 to Rs. 5,63,000, and the annual expenditure on Conservancy and Public Works from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs to Rs. 4,89,000. The Local Funds Revenue likewise increased from Rs. 5,75,000 to Rs. 8,75,000 per annum, and the annual expenditure on Communications and Conservancy from Rs. 3,72,000 to Rs. 6,97,000.

During his Highness' reign Municipalities were benefitted to the extent of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lakh a year by assignments from the State Revenues, and the District Funds were also benefitted to the extent of  $\frac{3}{4}$  lakh a year by the transfer of 657 miles of roads from the District Fund to the P.W.D. Budget. .

Sanitation :—Special attention to Sanitation was an important feature of His Highness' reign. In addition to ordinary sanitary works carried out by the various District Fund Boards and Municipalities, His Highness devoted the large sum of Rs. 27,15,221 from State Revenues for the improved sanitation of the Capital Cities of Mysore and Bangalore and of the larger mofussil towns throughout the State. Among the more important works which were

completed, or are approaching completion, may be mentioned (1) the water-supply and partial drainage of Mysore, (2) the filling in of the insanitary ditch round that city, (3) the extension of the Mysore and Bangalore cities, (4) the scheme of water-supply to the latter, (5) water-supply drainage and extension schemes for the mofussil towns, besides numerous drinking water wells throughout the State.

Medical Relief :—The number of Hospitals and Dispensaries rose from 19 to 114 and the number of patients treated from 1,30,723 to 7,06,915. His Highness fully appreciating the importance of Lady Dufferin's philanthropic movement directed the training and employment of midwives all over the country and the opening of Special Dispensaries for women and children. All but 3 Taluks out of 66 have been provided with midwives and 5 Dispensaries for women and children have been opened in District Head-quarter towns.

Population :—In the ten years from 1881 to 1891 the population increased by 18.34 per cent. a higher ratio than in the surrounding Provinces, and there is reason to believe that during the last four years the ratio of increase was even higher. During His Highness' reign the rate of mortality is estimated to have declined 6.7 per mile and the average duration of life to have risen from 24.93 to 25.30."

But the most important point of the above report was that such a marvellous and marked improvement could have been carried out without the increase of taxation nor by the levying of any additional dues, but by a normal expansion of the resources of the State, initiated and inspired by the rare genius of the new Dewan. "Such phenomenal success cannot be achieved without far-reaching reform in the constitution of the administrative machinery. And it is interesting to note that Sir Seshadri Iyer appointed separate heads for the

principal departments of service—which were previously under the direct control of the Dewan—and organised some new departments also." He has not hesitated to take legislative action in social questions, and passed a regulation prohibiting marriage to certain age limits, inspite of his encountering bitter opposition from orthodox section of the Hindu community. Seshadri Aiyar's Government started with a debt of 30 lakhs of rupees in 1883, but in 1888, the debt was completely repaid ; and in 1895, when addressing the Legislative Assembly, he was able to declare that the State had assets amounting to 176 lakhs. The Revenue of the State in 1883 was 103 lakhs ; but in 1900 it had reached such a high figure as 180 lakhs. The achievement which has undoubtedly immortalized the name of Sir Seshadri Aiyar in Mysore was the Cauvery Project,—the first of its kind in the East. The utilisation of the Cauvery Falls at Sivasamudram, which had been affording delight to spectators for centuries, was initiated at a large cost. The magnificent success which the project has proved, may be realised from the fact that the net revenue derived by the State from this scheme was more than  $17\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs of rupees in the year 1906-07. To add greater prosperity to the State he encouraged the working of the Kolar Gold Mines, and the State now participates in a profit of 15 lakhs a year as against half a lakh which was paid as royalty at the beginning. He did not only encourage the Public Works, Irrigation and Railways (the latter having been extended to the extent of 400 miles for traffic up to the beginning of 1901, as against the 58 miles of railway at the time of the rendition), but he introduced such departments as Geology, Bacteriology, Archaeology, Agricultural Chemistry, Meteorology and Sanitation. 'Every existing department was overhauled from top to bottom and thoroughly reorganised with the infusion of new blood.' He was the first to introduce the scheme of agricultural

banks in the State of Mysore in 1894, but it was owing to the ignorance of the people, that the project did not meet with unmixed success. Sir Seshadri Aiyar is truly called the maker of modern Mysore, the fact which may be gauzed from the summing up of all the reports of his reforms and improvements introduced into this great State, that he had spent during his tenure of office two and a half millions sterling. The Mysore Representative Assembly was organised and established by Ranga Charlu, composed of the nominated representatives of the people. Sir Seshadri at first widened the scope and functions of the Assembly by placing it on a representative and electoral basis. But latterly when the relations between him and the Assembly became considerably strained, he largely curtailed its powers. On the death of the Maharaja in 1894, he was made President of the Council of Regency in addition to being Dewan. Owing to continued ill-health, he retired from the service of the Mysore State at the beginning of 1901, after serving the State for thirty-two years, seventeen of which were spent as Dewan, on a pension of Rs. 2,000 a month and a bonus of four lakhs of rupees.

**The End of his Career.** The brilliant and successful statesmanship of Seshadri Aiyar did not fail to receive due recognition at the hands of the British Government. In February, 1887, soon after Lord Dufferin's visit to Mysore, he was made a C. S. I.; and in 1893, during Lord Elgin's administration, he was promoted to the order of K. C. S. I. The Maharaja bestowed on him the title of Raja Dhurandhara. The University of Madras made him a Fellow in 1887. After his retirement from service, he went on an extensive pilgrimage to various holy places in Southern India. But he was not destined to enjoy his well-earned rest for a considerable time. Sir Seshadri Aiyar passed away suddenly on September 13, 1901, and the passing away of this great Indian statesman

caused a sense of sorrow all over the country. We reproduce below the remarks of some writers dealing with his biographical memoir :—

“Sir Seshadri Iyer was a type of the efficient statesman. An intimate and unrivalled knowledge of every department of the administration, an untiring activity, a colossal resourcefulness, masterfulness that awed and subdued, a passionate desire to rise to the highest of which he was capable—these were the secrets of his success. He may have had his faults. \* \* But his achievements are writ large in the annals of Mysore.”

“Sir K. Sheshadri was a man of great strength of character. He had an iron will, and all opposition to him simply strengthened him in his determination to continue in the way he had begun. He had also the capacity of reading the character of other men ; and he succeeded in selecting proper men as his assistants, in whom he placed the utmost confidence. \* \* He was scrupulously honest, and never permitted his private affairs to be mixed up with those of the State. \* \* Another characteristic of the man was that, though a noble product of Western civilisation, he was at the same time profoundly religious. As Sir William Hunter put it in an article about him in the *Times* in 1893, he was a ‘statesman who had given his head to Herbert Spencer and his heart to Para Brahma.’ In this respect probably he resembled Sir Dinkar Rao, who, after his retirement from political work, devoted himself to his religion till the day of his death. \* \* Those who saw Sir K. Sheshadri in official life, with his freedom from caste prejudices, his readiness to sanction any liberal measures which would conduce to the benefit of the State, apart from religious and other considerations, could hardly believe that the same man, when stripped of his official robes, preferred to clothe himself in a tiger skin and contemplate Para Brahma in the interior of his household. According to his last wish, his body was enveloped in a tiger skin before it was cremated.”

When installing the present Maharaja of Mysore in August, 1902, Lord Curzon thus summed up the career of Sir Seshadri Aiyar in the State of Mysore : "The first Dewan Mr. Rangea Charlu, did not long survive the rendition, but his successor, Sir Seshadri Aiyar, for 18 years wielded an authority that was a reflex of his powerful character and abilities, and that left its mark upon every branch of the administration."

Mr. D. E. Wacha as President of the seventeenth session of the Indian National Congress in 1901 said : "We cannot but be sorry for the death, at the early age of fifty-seven, of Sir Seshadri, the distinguished Dewan of the Mysore State. In him the country loses an administrator of the highest capacity and most matured experience. He was the latest instance of the Indian statesman, who had shown himself capable of governing fully an indigenous State with as much skill and sagacity, judgment and determination, tact and sympathy as some of the greatest of English administrators who have left their mark on British Indian history. Sir Seshadri has now gone to swell that illustrious roll of modern Indian statesmen at whose head shines the ever-to-be-remembered Sir Salar Jung ; but let us hope that all our Native States may from time to time produce administrators of similar ability and renown to demonstrate, if demonstration be still needed, that statesmanship is not a monopoly which is confined to one race and one country alone."

Lord Hardinge, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, unveiled the statue of Sir Seshadri Aiyar at Bangalore on the 20th November, 1913, when His Excellency spoke as follows :—

"It gives me very great pleasure to assist at this ceremony to commemorate the name of the late Sir Seshadri Aiyar, who for so many years held the high office

of the Dewan of Mysore. I had not the privilege of his personal acquaintance but that he was a man of notable qualities and strong character, is testified by the record of his labours during the long period he was associated with the administration of this State, for his work is written large on every page of Mysore history of that time.

It is sometimes said that the Pax Britannica has taken all the romance out of Indian life and it is true that the old opportunities of carving with the sword a way to fortune and glory are gone I hope never to return. But when I think of the distinguished Indian who is my colleague and Indian members of other councils both in India and at Home, not to speak of the many eminent men who are at the head of various professions and industries, I doubt whether there is very much truth in the saying I have quoted. Sir Seshadri Aiyar rose from the very lowest rungs of the official ladder and after he had climbed it step by step his outstanding merit marked him out for the office of Dewan and that at a time when the task was not any easy one for the country had not yet begun to recover from the severest famine of the last half century yet with the support and under the wise guidance of His Highness, the late Maharaja Sir Chama Rajendra Wadiar Bahadur, he was able to achieve much that reflects credit on Indian statesmanship.

The revenues of the country of which stood at 100 lakhs when he took charge had reached the high figure of 180 lakhs when he laid down office. Agriculture and trade flourished and every department of the State felt the guiding hand of the chief minister. Large public works designed to protect the country against the effects of famine were undertaken and many parts of the country were opened out by roads and communications.

The educational opportunities of the people were enlarged and the facilities for medical relief multiplied while the two capital cities of Bangalore and Mysore owe much to Sir Seshadri Aiyar for the part he played in bringing

into existence, the excellent system of water-supply which they now enjoy. But the most remarkable achievement of all was his conception and execution with the skilled assistance of Major Jolly De Lotbiniere of the Cauvery power Installation Scheme which besides bringing in handsome revenues to the State coffers is contributing materially to its industrial development. It is gratifying to me to learn that His Highness' Government have further developed and are still developing the scheme initiated by him and I have every hope that the results will be of ever increasing value for the promotion of the material wealth and prosperity of the country.

Sir Seshadri Aiyar has thus left a record behind him which marks him out with Sir Salar Jung of Hyderabad, Raja Sir Dinkar Rao of Gwalior and Sir T. Madhava Rao of Indore and Baroda as a member of the group of Indian statesmen whose fame has spread far beyond the borders where they laboured so faithfully and so well and whose names will remain as a lasting example to their successors. I am proud to have the privilege of unveiling the statue of such a man as this and it only remains for me to congratulate the Memorial Committee on the conclusion of their labours and to express the hope that his statue may long serve to bring to the minds of future generations, the memory of a great Indian statesman."



## RAJA LACHMAN SINGH.

"Lachman Singh is without any exception the ablest and most useful coadjutor that it has yet been my good fortune to meet with. It is now seven years since we first began to work together and during all these many years in which he has been not only my willing and indefatigable assistant but also one of my most loved and valued friends, no single thing has ever occurred to shake my confidence in, or diminish my respect for him."

—Allan O. Hume.

**Family History.** Raja Lachman Singh of Wazirpur in Agra, who made his name by his various acts of usefulness in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, was born on the 9th of October, 1826. He belonged to the Jadon clan of the lunar race of Rajputs, a warrior class, originally resident at Karemna in Rajputana. About 260 years ago, Karemna was burnt by the troops of the Raja of Alwar at the time of a war with the Raja of Bhartpur, when his great-grandfather, Rao Kalyan Singh, took his refuge in Bhartpur. Ram Singh, the eldest son of the Rao, was appointed *Fotehdar* of Pargana Ruphas by the Raja of Bhartpur, but was subsequently poisoned; and the younger son, Jagram Singh (grandfather of the Raja) took service in Sindhia's army and rose to a high military position. He died at Aligarh a few months before the capture of that fortress by the British, and his sons (Rao Sitaram Singh, Thàkur Bhavani Singh, Thàkur Rupram Singh and Thàkur Chaitram Singh) removed to Agra. Thàkur Rupram served in the military department and had two sons, the eldest was Raja Lachman and the younger Thàkur Mohan Lal Singh, who afterwards rose to be a Judge of the Small Cause Court

and was for some time District and Sessions Judge in the Province of Agra and Oudh.

**Early Life and Services under Government.** Lachman Singh received his elementary education in his home till he attained the age of twelve. Then in 1838, he was admitted to the Agra College, and studied in that College till the middle of 1847. He passed the Senior Scholarship Examination with credit, and attained a silver medal. It is said that he was one of the most favourite pupils of the then Principal of the College, Mr. Caine. In the College, he received some scholarships and medals for the success he achieved at its examinations.

After completing his educational career, he entered the service of Government first as a Translator in the North-West Provinces Secretariat on July 1, 1847, on a monthly pay of Rs. 100. For his able services, he rose to be a Deputy Collector in 1857 and was posted to Banda. His promotions in the service were very quick for the able manner in which he discharged his duties, and rose to be a first grade Deputy Collector in 1863 on Rs. 800 a month. The greater part of his service was spent in the head quarters of the districts of Etawah and Bulandshahr, where he earned the golden opinion of all ; and his memory is still preserved in those districts in connection with the various works of public usefulness. Mr. A. O. Hume of revered memory, while Collector of Etawah, spoke highly of him, and brought to the notice of Government the worth of his services. In 1861, he wrote to the Divisional Commissioner : "Kour Lachman Singh's services have been favourably noticed on many other occasions by the Government both in his judicial and revenue capacity and for the great assistance that he has given me in all my educational and other undertakings for the benefit of the district, while his gallantry on one occasion during the rebellion led to

the Governor-General ordering his promotion to the first grade of Deputy Collectors. \* \* You are well acquainted with Kour Lachman Singh, and have repeatedly expressed your high opinion of his merits. The senior member at least of the Board, knows him even better and the Board as a body have continually praised his management of the Court of Wards, &c. The Lieutenant-Governor himself personally expressed his high approbation of the services and yet Kour Lachman Singh still remains without the promotion that the Governor-General publicly promised him." Again Mr. Hume wrote to the Commissioner in the same year that "Kour Lachman Singh's services in all departments have recently formed the subject of a special report to you and I need here only say that I should be sorry to change him for any other Deputy Collector in India." In the final report of the Bulandshahr settlement, the Settlement Officer, Mr. T. Stoker, I. C. S., remarked : "Raja Lachman Singh only remained long enough at settlement work to give reason to regret that an officer of his ability and great experience should be soon lost. His extensive knowledge of the district was always readily imported and proved of much service." In August, 1887, he was appointed to hold charge of the office of Magistrate and Collector at Bulandshahr in addition to his own duties, and he was the first Indian to attain the position in his Province. At last in 1888, he retired from the service of Government and settled at Agra associating him with all works of public utility.

**His Services at the time of the Mutiny.** Raja Lachman Singh was well-known for the gallant services he rendered at the time of the Indian Mutiny in 1857-58. The district gazetteer of Etawah, published by the Government of Agra and Oudh in 1911, contains several remarks about his valuable services at the time of the Mutiny. In page 152, we find a passage containing these expressions :—"Kunwar Lachman

Singh, Deputy Collector of Banda, who happened to be on leave at the time, now joined Mr. Hume, and in a few days the most perfect order was restored." In page 172, we find that "among the Indian officials who specially distinguished themselves, the first place must be given to Kunwar Lachman Singh, whose exemplary loyalty from first to last, ability in office, and bravery in the field have been repeatedly noticed." In recognition of his such brilliant services at the great crisis of the Sepoy Mutiny, he in 1859, received a khilat of Rupees 1,000 and was promoted to the 2nd. grade of Deputy Collector-ship. In 1864, he received from Government a *sunnud* granting him the proprietary right subject to payment of revenue, of certain land in the district of Agra. Then on January 1, 1877, Lord Lytton, conferred on him the title of Raja as a personal distinction, on the auspicious occasion of the assemblage of a Durbar at Delhi to assume the title of Empress of India by Queen Victoria. For the interest of the readers we quote below an extract from a private letter written by Mr. A. O. Hume to Raja Lachman Singh from Calcutta under date April 21, 1861 :—

"My dear Lachman Singh,—I had a long interview with Lord Canning yesterday and particularly brought your various and varied services to his notice. He took a note of your name, etc., and promised to do something for you. I believe he contemplates conferring some honorary title on you ; but there is no doubt I think he will do something for you. \* \* Persevere with the paper. Push on education, you have no idea how much is thought down here of what we are doing. Push on. Remember that no halting. Push on. I have shown you the way of distinction and even though it be a little long and wearisome push on. Now dear Lachman Singh good bye, I hope to join you in good health please God by the end of the year. Till then I hope you may enjoy health

and happiness. \* \* I sail I believe to-morrow or at latest the day after."

**His Acts of Public Usefulness.** We now proceed to relate the various acts of his public beneficence, for which his name was well-known all over the country. The Hindu residents of Bulandshahr built a second ghat, a little higher up the stream, in connection with the temple of Rámesvar, and called it the *Lachman Ghat*, in the name of Raja Lachman Singh, who had been a Deputy Collector of the district for a long period of 17 years, and who was highly and deservedly esteemed by all classes of the community. He was one of the members of the Executive Committee of the Agra College and helped much in its improvement and gave a donation of Rs. 2,000. He was one of the organisers in establishing the Rajput Boarding House at Agra. In 1887, the Raja was appointed a Fellow of the University of Calcutta. As to his literary acquirements, he translated into Hindi the great Sanskrit work, *Sakuntala* by Kalidas, in prose, in 1863, which was published in London in 1876 with critical and grammatical English notes by Mr. Frederic Pincott, for the students preparing the Indian Civil Service Examination. In its preface he wrote : "The text of the play here given is a critical reprint of the translation of Kunvar Lachman Singh, a Deputy Collector of the North-West Provinces. It is exceedingly well executed, and, while adhering faithfully to the Sanskrit, moves with all the freedom of an original composition. I have already commended Mr. Lachman Singh's unpedantic vocabulary ; and I may here add, that the idioms he employs, also, are those of every-day life." In 1885, he translated the same work into Hindi Verse, which is a text book for the Matriculation Examination of the Allahabad University. In 1882, he translated the *Meghaduta* into Hindi Verse, and he also translated into Hindi the *Raghuvansam* in 1878. The

*Homeward Mail* in its issue of March 27, 1883, published an excellent review of the works by the Raja, in which it was remarked : "Some years ago Raja Lachman Singh gratified students by a Hindi translation of the famous "Sakuntala." This work was remarkable for its vivacity, its elegance of expression, and for its faithful reproduction of the beauties of the marvellous original. The "Raghuvansha" shows the careful accuracy of a ripe scholar, and a command over the language which carries the reader with lightness and pleasure over the 550 pages which compose this book. The "Cloud Messenger," of which only the first half is as yet printed, is a more ambitious work. It renders one of the finest poems of India's finest bard into modern Hindi Verse—a performance requiring gifts very far from common. The difficult task has been ably accomplished by the learned Raja. His verses are in the Braj form of Hindi, and read with remarkable sweetness and melody. There is, in them, no affectation of archaic barbarisms, so common among lesser Hindi poets ; who seem to imagine that the chief excellence of poetry lies in its unintelligibility. Raja Lachman Singh seems to be aware that simplicity is a mark of genius. He punctually renders verse by verse, placing the Sanskrit original on the opposite page of each ; and adds numerous explanatory notes, and a prose commentary in Hindi. \* \* He has placed himself among the first rank of Hindi writers, and is, by his works cultivating and enriching the vernacular he loves, and rendering it suitable to express the expanding ideas of an intellectual and rising people." He has also compiled in English a "Historical and Statistical Memoir of Zila Bulandshahr" in 1872, which contains information on all matters of local interest and it was the first gazetteer of that district that was published under the authority of the Local Government. In consideration of his literary achievements, the Raja was appointed a member of the Royal

Asiatic Society in 1884. Sir W. Muir, K. C. S. I., sometime Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, wrote him in a letter from England as follows :—

“Dear Lachman Singh,—As President of the Asiatic Society I was delighted, at our last sitting, to welcome your name as a new member of our Society. I never hear from you now. I should be so glad and so would Lady Muir to hear of the welfare of yourself and family, and any news about the old Provinces which contain so many things of interest, and also so many friends though they are dropping off one by one into the great future beyond. I should be much pleased to have a line from you. Lady Muir sends her salam to you. And I am, Yours sincere friend.”

In the Indian Public Services Commission of 1886-87, under the presidentship of Sir C. U. Aitchison, K. C. S. I., C. I. E., Raja Lachman Singh was one of the officers selected by Government to give his evidence before the Commission. He was mainly questioned on the Statutory Civil Service, the examination and the appointment. He said: “My scheme is, that there should be an examination in England and in India simultaneously. Subjects to be the same ; candidates passing in England or who pass in India go to England to qualify themselves according to the order of merit to be posted to any Province, but those who pass in India and do not go to England should be posted to their own Province, if they have secured the minimum of marks.” In fact, the Government sought his valued opinion whenever occasion arose.

The Raja was nominated by Government as Vice-Chairman of the Agra Municipality. He was the president of many educational institutions of the City. But his name was widely known as a friend of the Indian National Congress and he joined some of its earlier sessions. The Raja died on July 14,

1896, on the bank of the Ganges at Rajghat owing to dysentery at the ripe age of 70.

**His Worthy Descendants.** The Raja had two sons, Kumar Kanhai Singh and Kumar Mahendra Singh. The eldest was at first a member of the Provincial Executive Service, but after serving for 3 years, he resigned and settled at Agra and served for 30 years as Honorary Magistrate of the City. He was Vice-Chairman of the Agra District Board ; a member and sometime Vice-Chairman of the Agra Municipal Board ; a Trustee and member of the Agra College Managing Committee ; and President of the Board of Trustees of the Bulwant Rajput High School at Agra. He opened a girls' school at Agra with the co-operation of his uncle, Thákur Mohanlal. The second Kumar Mahendra Singh, who died in March, 1913, was a Deputy Collector for 27 years and officiated twice as District Magistrate. Among the Raja's grandsons, the eldest Kumar Jaswant Singh, an energetic young man, is an Honorary Magistrate ; a member of the Agra District Board ; a Trustee of the Agra College ; and a member of the Bulwant Rajput High School Committee. The properties of the Raja are situated in the districts of Agra, Muttra and Etah, since substantially improved than what was before. The second Kumar Lakhan Singh possesses a literary taste.



## DWARKA NATH SEN.

**"Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen was a man of no ordinary capacity. A scholar and a philanthropist his fame as an Ayurvedic Physician was spread throughout the land."**

—Sir Lawrence Jenkins.

**Family History.** Mahamahopadhyaya Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen Kaviratna was born of an ancient and respectable Vaidya family of village Khándárpárá in the district of Faridpur in the year 1843. His ancestors were all renowned Ayurvedic physicians and eminent scholars. Among them may be mentioned the name of his great-great-grand-uncle Mahamahopadhyaya Abhiram Kavindra who was attached to the Court of Raja Sitaram Roy of historic fame.

**Early Life.** Dwarka Nath was the eighth and youngest child of his parents, and was known to be of simple and careless habits in his boyhood. But as he grew up, his natural aptitude for knowledge developed in a remarkable degree. He studied grammar, literature and philosophy in Vikrampur, the famous seat of Sanskrit learning in East Bengal. Latterly, he studied the Hindu medical science, philosophy, law and the Upanishads under the great scholar, Kaviraj Gangadhar Sen of Murshidabad, who was well-known throughout the land for his erudition and learning. Dwarka Nath was a favourite pupil of that great savant and worthy successor to his profound scholarship and reputation, though perhaps he even surpassed him in his professional success.

**A Successful Physician.** In 1875, Dwarka Nath settled in Calcutta and set up his practice in Ayurvedic medicine. Within a few years, by his vast erudition, he made his mark as a successful physician, not only in Bengal but

**National Biography for India.**

---



**Mahamahopadhyaya Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen Kaviratna.**

*Born - 1843.*

*Die - 1906.*



in other parts of India. He had a very large number of pupils from different parts of the country and he used to teach them various branches of Sanskrit learning, chiefly the ancient medical literature of the Hindus with unmitigated zeal. Owing to the great reputation that he enjoyed for his skilful treatment, he obtained frequent calls from very respectable quarters in different parts of India, and wherever he went his treatment produced satisfactory results. Amongst many others that may be mentioned, the name of the late Maharaja of Hatwa, who summoned him for his own treatment in 1896. In 1901, when the Heir-Apparent to the throne of Mewar in Rajputana was suffering from some serious illness, His Highness the Maharana of Mewar applied to the Government of India for the best Ayurvedic medical aid available in India. The choice of Government fell upon Kaviraj Dwarka Nath who was sent to Udaipur, the capital city of Mewar. In consideration of his vast erudition and unique success in his profession, the Government for the first time recognised the Ayurvedic system and decorated him with the title of Mahamahopadhyaya in 1906. Dwarka Nath was the first Kaviraj to receive this distinction from the British Government.

**A Great man.** Although he was always busy with his own profession, yet he showed his patriotic zeal by regular attendance to the several sessions of the Indian National Congress both as a delegate and as a member of the Reception Committee. He was often found to take active part in political meetings—a thing quite unprecedented amongst the Sanskrit Pandits, especially of his age. His private charities were extensive and his left hand did not know what his right hand gave. He was a favourite with the Brahmin Pandits whom he gratified with his purse as well as with academical discussions. Dwarka Nath was calm in tempera-

ment, independent in spirit, affable in his behaviour, and patriotic to the core of his heart, of whom the whole country might be proud.

**His Death and Public Appreciation.** After a protracted illness of six months, the great Kaviraj breathed his last in Calcutta on the 11th February, 1909, leaving behind him a large family and many friends and admirers to mourn his loss. • His eldest son, Vaidyaratna Kaviraj Jogindra Nath Sen Vidyabhusan, M. A., who is a well-known physician in Calcutta and who is the first recipient of the new title 'Vaidyaratna', has already maintained the reputation of his great father. Some time after his death, the friends and admirers of Mahamahopadhyaya Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen convened a public meeting under the presidency of Maharaja Sir Prodyot Kumar Tagore to take steps to perpetuate his memory. It was decided to erect a statue of the Kaviraj in a public place in Calcutta ; and a Committee was formed with the late Rai Narendra Nath Sen Bahadur as president and public subscriptions were raised for the purpose. On the 29th. June, 1912, Sir Lawrence Jenkins, K. C. I. E., Chief Justice of Bengal unveiled the statue at Beadon Square, Calcutta, when Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu as President of the Dwarka Nath Memorial Committee opened the proceedings of the meeting and read the report of the Memorial Committee from which extracts are given below :—

"Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen was a distinguished Ayurvedic Physician of this City. His great erudition was not only in the particular branch of knowledge which he made his special study but generally in ancient Hindu literature and philosophy. His great skill in his profession, his large-hearted and unostentatious charity, his simple habits and the kindness of his disposition endeared him to his friends and made his presence always welcome at the

bedside of the sick. The Ayurvedic system of medicine was one of the first to suffer from the onerous of Western knowledge and Western methods. A Kaviraj was only called in when other remedies had failed : but even with this great handicap a few gifted men among the Ayurvedic practitioners of this City by their knowledge and skill maintained the high standard of efficiency of this system of treatment and to-day the Ayurvedic practitioner enjoys the same position and commands the same respect as his allopathic colleague trained under European methods. It will be invidious to mention a few names who may have laboured with conspicuous success but no exception can be taken if I refer to the services of Kaviraj Rama Nath Sen, and Gangaprasad Sen in Calcutta and of Gangadhar Sen in Berhampur in the cause they represented ; Kaviraj Gangadhar of Berhampur had a reputation for knowledge and learning which was unique in his day. A distinguished teacher he gave us a pupil who succeeded in a greater degree than his master did in establishing the claims of the Ayurvedic system ; for to Kaviraj Dwarka Nath who was one of Gangadhar's favourite pupils belongs the credit of being selected by the Government of India on the recommendation of the Principal of the Medical College, to undertake the treatment of the son and heir of the Rana of Udoypur and his merit was recognised by Government, which in conferring on him the title of "Mahamahopadhyaya" for the first time honoured an Indian Kaviraj. An equally distinguished Ayurvedic practitioner Kaviraj Bijoyratna Sen followed him in obtaining this great distinction. His absence we all mourn to-day for alas death has deprived his countrymen of his services long before his time.

\* \* My Lord, in venturing to approach you to unveil the statue of Mahamahopadhyaya Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen, we have asked you to associate your name with no mean citizen of this great City. He has left behind him numerous pupils all over India many of whom hold

distinguished positions in their profession : one of his pupils his son Jogindra Nath Sen has been one of the first recipients of the title which Government has lately been pleased to create for distinguished Ayurvedic practitioners. The statue will be a silent but eloquent monument of what true worth and ability combined with devotion and singleness of purpose can achieve even under the most adverse circumstances and will be a stimulus to our people to a higher and more strenuous life."

Before unveiling the bust, Sir Lawrence Jenkins said as follows :—

"Gentlemen,—It is in response to a long standing invitation that I am here this evening to lend a helping hand in unveiling the bust of M. M. Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen. I am at this disadvantage that I have not the honour of his acquaintance but his name and reputation are known to all and as it is thought my presence may assist in some small measure in paying honour to the memory of one to whom honour is due, I am gladly present on this occasion. Kaviraj D. N. Sen was a man of no ordinary capacity. A scholar and a philanthropist his fame as an Ayurvedic physician was spread throughout the land. More than once were his services requisitioned to attend on Princes of India and his merit was justly appreciated by the Government who conferred on him the title he bore in recognition of his skill and worth. \* \* But this at least I may safely say that the Kaviraj of to-day is the inheritor of observations of centuries and the collected experience of ages, and it is difficult to suppose that in that heritage nothing of good is to be found ; rather would I believe that it embodied much that is of high utility and worthy of investigation of the modern scientist.

Though it may be going too far to say with an old world observer that a doctor is nothing but a sort of consolation (*animi consolatio*) yet it must be within the personal experience of most of us that it is the patients' con-

fidence in his ability that is the physician's most potent ally in the fight with disease. In India with its hundreds of millions, if we exclude the few who have come under the spell of Western influence, it is to the Kaviraj, and the Hakim that the sickmen turn in their sufferings and their ailments for their mental consolation, and it is in the methods in their healing art and in their words of hope that the patients' confidence is placed.

\* \* It is a proud recompense of a life well-spent that it should be immortalised in the sculpture erected by admiring friends. This has been the reward of Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen's life-work and may his example and may this appreciation of his career stimulate others to a life of equal worth and merit."

His Lordship then unveiled the statue amid great rejoicings of those present. The "Bengalce" in its issue of June 29, 1912, remarked :—

"It is an unprecedented honour which his countrymen are going to do to the memory of the distinguished physician—for he is the first physician of any school to obtain this mark of popular esteem ; and richly did the late Kaviraj deserve this high recognition. The foremost Ayurvedic physician of his time, the late Mahamahopadhyaya was a man of vast erudition, and it is to him that we are chiefly indebted for the popularity of the Ayurvedic system at the present day, not only in Bengal, but in other Provinces. There is hardly a district in Bengal where one or other of the pupils of the late Kaviraj is not in established practice, while numbers of his pupils are to-day to be found scattered all over the country. It was in the fitness of things that Kaviraj Dwarka Nath Sen should have been the first Ayurvedic practitioner to obtain Government recognition, and the public recognition of which to-day's function is an unmistakable proof, was at once at the basis of that recognition and is a fitting sequel to it."

## MAHARANI SVARNAMAYEE.

**"It would be impossible to recount all the Maharani's benefactions for public purposes. Her purse was always open to applicants for any good cause."**

—C. E. Buckland.

**Early History of the Cossimbazar Raj.** Maharani Svarnamayee of Cossimbazar in Bengal, whose name was a household word in this country for her philanthropic devotion and charitable disposition, next only to those of Ahalya Bai of Jhansi and Rani Bhavani of Natore, whose names are familiar to readers of Indian History, came of a poor Teli (oil seller) family at the village of Bhàtakul in the district of Burdwan in the cold month of November, 1827. We find in the History of Bengal that this family came to be known when the Mahomedan supremacy began to wane and the British Power to take its place. The founder of the family, Krishna Kanta Nundy, better known as Kanta Babu, was a *Mohorir* (vernacular clerk) in the Factory at Cossimbazar, when Warren Hastings was in charge of it. Kanta rendered important service to him, in consideration of which, when Hastings became Governor-General, he was soon after appointed as his Dewan. Kanta Babu then began to acquire landed property in some districts of Bengal, notably the pargana of Baherband in the district of Rangpur, which was in the possession of the heir of the said Rani Bhavani, and yielding an annual income of 4 lakhs of rupees. In short, the prosperity of the house owes chiefly to him, who in a short time was able to acquire extensive landed interests in different parts of the country. However, in 1793, he died and was succeeded by his son, Loke Nath Nundy, who is said to have improved the estates and received the title of Raja from

the British Government. He having died at a premature age in 1804, leaving a son of one year old by the name of Harinath, the estate was placed under the management of the Court of Wards. On his attaining majority, he took over the estate, and was made a Raja by Lord Amherst. He further improved his estate and supported every good cause of his time. He is said to have contributed a handsome donation of Rs. 15,000 for the construction of the Hindoo College in Calcutta. When he died in 1832, he left a minor son named Krishna Nath, a daughter named Govinda Sundari, and wife Rani Harasundari. The estate again passed into the management of the Court of Wards. Krishna Nath received a good training in English and Persian. On attaining majority, he was honoured with the distinction of Raja by the Government of Lord Auckland. He is said to have taken lively interest in the advancement of English education, and bore a large share of expenditure in the erection of marble statue in memory of that pioneer of English education in India, Mr. David Hare, which still stands in the Hare School Compound in Calcutta. The Raja married Svarnamayee, when she was only 11 years old. She was then known as Saroda Sundari, but it was the Raja Krishna Nath who named her Svarnamayee. Owing to some private reasons, the Raja died by his own hand on the 31st October, 1844, at his Calcutta residence, leaving two daughters, who soon followed their father.

**How Svarnamayee becomes owner of the Raj.** Thus it will be seen that Svarnamayee became widow at the age of 17. By a will, Raja Krishna Nath made over his whole estate to the East India Company for the establishment of a Krishna Nath University at Murshidabad. By the provision of that will she was provided with only a subsistence allowance of Rs. 1,500 a month during her life-time. The estate was then yielding an annual income of rupees 6 lakhs, which was

taken possession of by the Company. Svarnamayee brought a suit in the late Supreme Court in Calcutta against the Company contesting the validity of her husband's will. After nearly 3 years, the suit was decided in her favour on the 15th November, 1847, the will having been declared by the Court invalid, as the Raja was proved to have been in unsound mind at the time of its execution. This favourable decision was said to have been largely due to the keen insight of her Dewan, Rajib Lochan Rai, who was known to be a man of strong common sense, and under whose efficient management the condition of the Raj materially improved.

**Acts of her Munificence.** Svarnamayee being a Hindoo widow, considered it a part of her religion to give away her income largely for her country's cause and for private welfare. Her purse was always open to those who were in need of her help for deserving purposes. The *Hindoo Patriot* once wrote : "Though not educated in the literature and sciences of the East or West, she has been educated in that which is of the highest moment to society and humanity—in the noble science of relieving distress, of wiping the widow's tears, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, sheltering the houseless, helping the poor student and the struggling author, and ministering to the relief and comforts of the sick." It was estimated that she gave about a crore of rupees during her life-time. We give below a list of her munificence :—

In 1871-72, she contributed Rs. 3,000 to the Sailor's Home at Chittagong ; Rs. 1,000 to the Midnapore High School ; Rs. 1,000 to the Calcutta Chadni—Hospital ; Rs 1,000 to the improvement of the river Bhoirab in Jessore ; and Rs. 1,000 to the relief of distress in Murshidabad.

In 1872-73, she gave Rs. 1,500 to the Bethune Female School ; Rs. 500 to the Bogra Institution ; Rs. 8,000 to the new Native Hospital ; Rs. 1,500 to the relief of sufferers from

epidemic fever ; and Rs. 1,000 to the construction of Baharamganj Road.

In 1874-75, she contributed, amongst other things, upwards of a lakh and ten thousand rupees towards the relief of distress in Murshidabad, Dinajpur, Pabna, Bogra, Nuddea, 24-Parganas and Burdwan.

In 1875-76, she gave Rs. 10,000 to the Berhampur College ; Rs. 5,000 to the Rajshahi Madrassa ; Rs. 2,000 to the Cuttack College ; and Rs. 500 to the Garo Hills Dispensary.

In 1876-77, she contributed Rs. 1,000 to the Calcutta Female School established by Miss Milman ; Rs. 4,000 to the Rangpur High School ; Rs. 1,000 to the Aligarh College ; Rs. 14,000 to the Calcutta Zoological Garden ; Rs. 8,000 to the Famine Association of Calcutta ; and Rs. 3,000 to the sufferers from the cyclone in Backerganj.

In 1878-79, she gave Rs. 11,121 for purchasing warm clothing for the poor ; Rs. 500 to the Jangipur Dispensary ; Rs. 10,000 to the Madras Famine Relief Fund ; Rs. 1,000 to the Temple Native Asylum ; Rs. 500 to the Howrah Dispensary ; Rs. 3,000 to the Calcutta Oriental Seminary ; Rs. 1,000 to the sufferers from fires which occurred in Bankura and Nuddea ; Rs. 500 to the Calcutta District Charitable Society ; Rs. 1,000 to the McDonald Indian Association ; and Rs. 1,000 to Miss Fendal's Institution for fallen women.

Besides the above list, she contributed Rs. 1,50,000 for the construction of Berhampur water works ; Rs. 1,50,000 for the establishment of the Krishnanath College at Berhampur and Rs. 20,000 annually for its maintenance ; Rs. 1,00,000 for the establishment of the Svarnamayee Hostel in the Calcutta Medical College compound ; Rs. 10,000 for the construction of Bethune College in Calcutta ; and Rs. 10,000 for the Elliot Hostel in the Campbell Medical School in Calcutta.

It will be interesting to go through a letter of the

Maharani, which she addressed to Rai Kristo Das Pal Bahadur C. I. E., Editor of the "Hindoo Patriot" in 1878 in connection with her contribution towards the Calcutta Oriental Seminary. We reproduce below the letter in full :—

Cossimbazar Rajbaree.

*The 18th. April, 1878.*

Dear Sir,—It gives me much pain to learn that the Oriental Seminary, the oldest private native school in existence, and an Institution that once so flourished as to vie with the late Hindoo College has no habitation of its own. Piteous as the case is, the proposal that has been made to give it a permanent footing by causing a building to be erected for it has my sincere approval, and I feel extremely pleased to understand that a fund is being raised for the purpose. In aid of an object fraught with so much good, I beg, with unfeigned satisfaction, to cover a remittance of (Rs. 3,000) three thousand as the amount of my humble donation. I would have been very happy if I could accord a greater help, but having, as you already know, multifarious calls to respond to, I am sorry I am not destined to enjoy that happiness. I, however, hope that the gift will prove useful and acceptable.

Yours faithfully,

*Maharani Svarnamayee.*

**Bestowal of Honours.** In recognition of her public spirit and liberality, Svarnamayee was at first given the title of Rani, and then she was promoted to the rank of Maharani in 1871. In 1875, her Dewan, Rajib Lochan Rai was made a 'Rai Bahadur.' She was afterwards made a member of the Imperial Order of the Crown of India by Her Gracious Majesty the Queen Victoria in 1878. On the 14th. August of that year, a Darbar was held at the family residence of the Maharani, at which Mr. B. Peacock, the then Commissioner

of the Presidency Division, presented her with the *insignia* of the new order, and made a graceful address, an extract of which is culled below :—

“Your appointment to the order is in recognition of the public spirit as well as of the munificent charity you have at all times and in so many ways displayed. \* \* It would not be difficult for me to recount the doings of your long past years, which have, with those that have followed, made your life one long act of charity. \* \* Thus during the years to which I have referred, you have contributed nearly  $5\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs of rupees to works of charity and public utility which does not fall short of  $\frac{1}{6}$ th of your entire income. Large, however, as this amount undoubtedly is, it is not so much as the manner in which it has been given that makes it conspicuous. In the country we are spasmodic to see a good deal of what I may call spasmodic money-giving where large sums are frequently given to purposes no doubt very good and very useful, but which are aided not so much because they are so as because the donors hope to bring their names before the public, or obtain some future reward. This has not been your case. You have not been content to wait till you were asked to give, but have taken steps to ensure worthy objects for assistance being brought to your notice, and have then given liberally, hoping for nothing in return. In a word, your charity has been such as springs from a simple unostentatious desire to do good, where the left hand knoweth not what the right hand doeth, which is as admirable as I fear it is uncommon. Of the management of your large estates lying in no less than 10 districts in Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, I need say but little. In this you have always taken an active part and have manifested an acquaintance with detail and an aptitude for business generally, almost if not quite without parallel among persons of your sex in this country. \* \* It is now only remains for me to express the hope that you may live long in all prosperity

to enjoy the honour you have now attained and which you have worthily deserved."

She was further honoured by Government by promising the title of *Maharaja* to her heir.

Sir Richard Temple, Bart., G. C. S. I., in his famous book, "Men and Events of my time in India," writes as follows :—

"Of all persons in Bengal, the most munificent was a widow lady Rani (now *Maharani*) *Svarnamayee*. She was a strictly orthodox and devout Hindu, much given to works of piety, but ever ready to dedicate some part of her great wealth to works of practical benevolence. Her gifts were generous, not only for the relief of famine, but also for the alleviation of suffering in every form ; nor were appeals for help in promoting objects of public utility ever made to her in vain. I have had the pleasure of holding communications with her, not in an interview face to face, but by audience with a curtain drawn between us. She has, by the gracious favour of the Queen, been admitted to the order of the Crown of India. Her career used to remind us of the historic record of the good *Mahratta* princess *Ahalya Bai* of Central India."

**Her Death.** *Maharani Svarnamayee* died on the 25th August, 1897, at the ripe age of 70. Her estates lie in the districts of Murshidabad, Nuddea, Jessore, 24-Parganas, Burdwan, Howrah, Rajshabi, Pabna, Dinajpur, Malda, Rangpur, Bogra, Faridpur, Ghazipur and Azamgarh yielding an annual income of 8 lakhs. She was succeeded by her nephew *Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nundy*, who is an ideal nobleman at the present time, and has always maintained the liberal traditions of the house.





## NOTICE

The work contains detailed lives and excellent portraits of all illustrious men and women who flourished in 19th and 20th Centuries in India and Ceylon, and is divided into two series. The first series contains 300 lives with portraits in 30 parts priced at Rs. 20 (including postage) payable in four equal instalments of Rs. 5/- each or parts 1, 8, 15 and 22. Single copies are sold at Re. 1/- with annas two as postage. For students who are taking the whole series, each part will be charged half the rate, i. e. annas eight excluding postage. The book can be had from the author and all correspondence should be made to him at Dacca.







920/DAS



17125

